



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Feminist Development Policy

For Just and Strong Societies Worldwide



bmz.de



Dear Readers,

For me, feminist development policy is about justice. Women and girls make up half the world's population – so they should also wield half of the power. Women have an important role to play in sustainable development. They have so much strength, knowledge, special skills and innovative ideas – in short, they have immense potential!

As the Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie emphasises: We should all be feminists! Gender equality is key for the achievement of the goals set in Agenda 2030: it makes societies stronger. If women have equal rights and bear equal responsibility, there is less poverty, less hunger and more stability in the world. In other words, strengthening the rights, the resources and the representation of women and girls brings dividends.

Everyone has the same rights, regardless of their gender, their origin or other personal characteristics – this is enshrined in the International Bill of Human Rights. Thus far, however, these rights have not been realised fully in any country of the world. With this feminist development policy, I wish to address the structural causes, level out unequal power relations and make a contribution to enabling equal participation by all people.

Feminist development policy is not a “policy by women for women”. Feminist development policy promotes global justice, prosperity and social cohesion. And that benefits everyone!

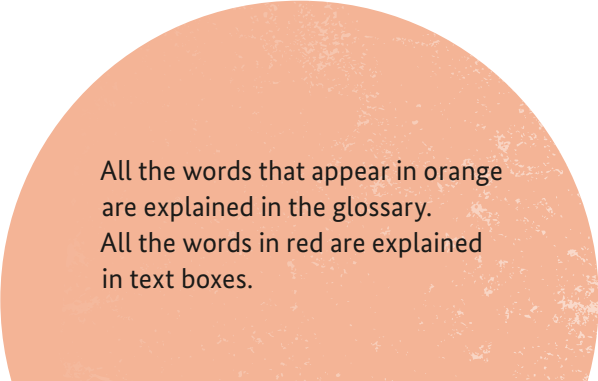
Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Svenja Schulze". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Svenja" being more prominent than the last name "Schulze".

*Svenja Schulze
Federal Minister for Economic
Cooperation and Development*

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1 Feminist development policy

For just and strong societies worldwide

Societies can only be **peaceful and stable** if everyone is able to participate on the basis of equality. However, genuine **equality** has not been achieved in any country of the world – **even though it is a human right**. Around the world, people continue to be **discriminated against** and oppressed – due to their **gender**, their age, their religion or for some other reason. Women and girls are the largest disadvantaged group within the population. This is the consequence of **patriarchal power structures**, which have prevailed worldwide for hundreds of years. For too long, it was considered normal for men

to dominate within society; for women to be excluded from decision-making processes; for women to hold just 25 per cent of parliamentary seats worldwide – still the case today; for more boys than girls to be in school around the world; for 130 million girls to be denied the right to education; for women and girls to be more at risk of violence. One in three women suffers physical or sexual violence at least once in her lifetime, and in some regions of the world, the figure is as high as 70 per cent. The list could go on and on.



Rights: Grievance mechanisms and rights to take legal action against exploitation in supply chains

Supply chains often start with women and girls, notably in the textiles industry. They often work in poor conditions, without decent pay, without protection from exploitation, for up to 14 hours a day. And above all, they often lack the opportunity to exercise self-determination and change their situation. In this respect, the German Supply Chain Act, which came into effect in early 2023, is a milestone in eliminating existing patriarchal power structures in the area of rights. Among other things, the Act requires the establishment of transparent and accessible grievance mechanisms which enable workers to defend themselves more effectively from exploitation and abuses of power. And with the planned EU supply chain Directive, we are going a step further: workers from the Global South will then be able to claim their rights in German and European courts.

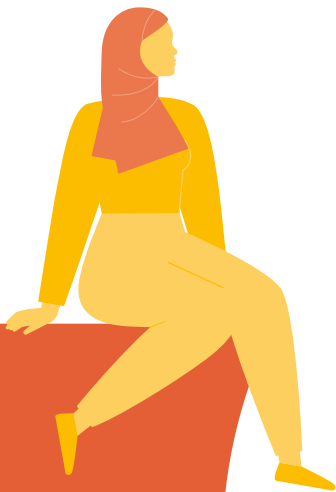
It is clear that despite suffering centuries of discrimination and oppression, women in all their diversity have always been drivers of social change. They are knowledge-bearers and decision-makers. They make up half of humanity. Women and girls are entitled to be treated equally at last. Everyone will benefit!

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ) is striving for just and strong societies worldwide. Our **feminist** development policy aims to eliminate discriminatory structures – **for women and girls, and also for marginalised groups**. Its focus is on gender equality.

We pursue a **gender-transformative** and **intersectional** approach. This means that we aim to eliminate the **structural and systemic causes of inequality and consider the intersections between diverse forms of discrimination** – thus enabling **equal and self-determined participation by all people in social, political and economic life**. To that end, society must challenge existing **inequalities** and address stereotypes.

Many feminisms, one common feature

The BMZ recognises that a **single** concept of feminism does not exist. 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.



Resources: Land ownership in Nepal

Women make up 43 per cent of the agricultural workforce globally – but less than 15 per cent of landholders are women. In Nepal, as in other countries, women often work on the land and thus produce food and income, but the land is owned by their husbands, brothers or fathers. Women on their own have no opportunity to gain access to land; they cannot even inherit it.

A coalition of grassroots organisations (Community Self Reliance Centre Nepal; National Land Rights Forum Nepal; Aviyan Nepal) convinced Parliament to change the law so that women and men can now own land jointly. This has not only improved women's access to land and income. In this case, it is also about power structures at multiple levels: women organised, defended their position in public debate, influenced legislation and secured their rights. They now have better access to resources and a higher standard of living.



How do we plan to achieve this? We focus on **three key areas, known as the “three Rs”: rights, resources and representation.** Equal **rights** are the precondition for genuine equality. The BMZ is working, for example with partner governments, to eliminate discriminatory laws and norms. It addresses issues such as the right to a free choice of occupation, without external constraints.

Or a woman's right to decide for herself if she wants children, and if so, when, and how many. It is about the right to inherit and own land. Or the right to voice one's opinion freely and without fear. These are inalienable human rights. We assist partner governments in respecting these rights and we empower women and girls to assert and exercise them.

In order to live self-determined lives, women and girls need equal access to **resources**. This is still a long way off. Women must be able to earn a decent income of their own and decide freely how to spend it. They must be able to access financial products and services and acquire property. And they need access to education, information and networks. Only then will women and girls be genuinely free to make their own life choices. So we want to improve access to and control over resources for women and girls.

Women and girls make up half of humanity. They therefore have a right to half the power. To that end, however, they must be represented in social, political and economic decision-making processes at all levels and participate on equal terms. Only then will they have a voice, an active role and ultimately a share of the benefits. That is why we aim to strengthen equal participation and **representation** of women and girls in decision-making processes.

Representation: Water supply

In Zambia's capital Lusaka, the representation of women in the Ward Development Committees – which decide on issues such as the local water supply – has been improved. In Zambia, women are often solely responsible for managing the household and so they know how much water is consumed, and where. Through this project, they gain access to training so that as members of the Ward Development Committees, they can share this knowledge and participate in municipal decision-making. They are represented – and are able to exert practical influence. And 23,000 households – including many women and girls – thus benefit from better protection of their water supply.



In order to achieve our objectives in these three areas, we are working at **three levels**:

The implementation level – shaping feminist development policy approaches and instruments

We are embedding feminist development policy in our procedures and instruments. By 2025, we aim to allocate **93 per cent** of newly committed project funding to projects and programmes which promote gender equality – compared with around 64 per cent in 2021. In pursuing this approach, the BMZ differentiates between measures whose principal objective is gender equality, and those for which it is a significant objective. We will undertake regular reviews to determine which measures to promote gender equality are most effective.

International cooperation – putting feminist development policy on the agenda

Feminist development policy objectives can only be achieved if we work in partnership with our partner countries and cooperate at the multilateral level. We are building on this approach and intend to expand our alliances with like-minded partners. We will also support and intensify our cooperation with civil society organisations, particularly in the **Global South**, for these organisations play a key role in bringing committed stakeholders together and dismantling power structures and gender roles. Together with our partners, we will develop our objectives and programmes and adapt them to local conditions in the countries concerned. We are aware that in relation to gender equality, conditions vary widely. And so there is a certain tension between advocating for the objectives and values of feminist development policy worldwide whilst also aiming to work in a spirit of partnership in each specific country context.

Women and marginalised groups in all their diversity

The aim of the BMZ’s feminist development policy is to eliminate discriminatory structures in order to build a society which enables **equal participation by all people**. It is thus centred around people who are marginalised and who consequently face barriers to this equal participation. **Marginalisation** is a process and a state that is created systemically by existing power structures and describes the sidelining of individuals or groups. 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.¹ 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. As **women and girls** are the largest group facing discrimination worldwide, they are the main focus of the BMZ’s feminist development policy. The phrase “in all their diversity” is added to express the existence of multiple identities and lived realities (see Text box: Intersectionality). Feminist development policy is based on an inclusive, non-**binary** understanding of gender (see Glossary entries on Binarism and Sex/ Gender).

¹ EIGE (2016): *Marginalized groups*.

The institutional level – leading by example

We will initiate a learning and change process within the BMZ. In doing so, we as a Ministry intend to lead by example by implementing feminist approaches and empowering our employees to realise feminist development policy objectives. The BMZ will also urge its implementing organisations (such as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW)) to advance these processes within their own structures. The goal is to raise awareness of feminist development policy and to increase employees' knowledge and skills accordingly.

The strategy builds on an extensive **consultation process**², especially with civil society organisations and experts from the Global South and North. Their insights and demands have had a formative effect on the strategy. The strategy is coordinated with the Federal Foreign Office (AA), which has developed its own Guidelines on Feminist Foreign Policy. The BMZ is also engaged in dialogue with other ministries.

² The results of the consultation process can be found on the BMZ website at www.bmz.de/en/issues/feminist-development-policy.



2 The starting point: Feminist development policy is more necessary than ever

General background and analysis

2.1 The challenges: the power gap and global crises worsen discrimination

German development policy operates within a system in which the distribution of social, economic and political power within societies, between countries and, not least, between the Global North and the Global South is highly unequal. The power gap between countries of the Global North and the Global South has its origins in colonialism and has evolved over the course of centuries. It is still evident today in inequitable income and wealth distribution, and in unequal opportunities to exert political influence in international institutions, among other things.

Power inequalities within societies are grounded in deep-rooted structural and often interlinked systems such as **patriarchy, racism, sexism, ableism** and **classism**. These systems perpetuate violent and unequal power structures. In the countries of the Global South, they are also associated with European **colonialism** and a colonial mindset which continue to have effects today. The devaluation of knowledge and education systems that was integral to colonialism is one reason why Indigenous knowledge, for example, is still not appropriately integrated into solutions to the climate crisis.³

The **global crises** put the realisation of human rights at risk and reinforce or entrench existing inequalities. A quarter of the world's population lives in conflict-affected areas, and the majority of the BMZ's partner countries display a heightened or acute potential for escalation.⁴ A study by UN Women on gender equality, published in 2022, shows how crises and conflicts reinforce attitudes that hold gender equality back.⁵ In (post-) conflict and displacement contexts, conflict-related and social violence increases; this applies particularly to **sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)**, up to and including its use as a weapon of war.⁶ Women and girls from socioeconomically **marginalised**, remote or rural areas are particularly exposed. Furthermore, women and girls are frequently subjected to violence because of their ethnic or religious identity or their **sexual orientation** and **gender identity**. Men, boys and **LGBTQI+** persons are also affected by conflict-related sexual violence and face a particularly high level of stigmatisation in this context.

3 IISD (2022): *Indigenous Peoples: Defending an Environment for All*.

4 Fund For Peace (2022): *Fragile States Index Annual Report 2022*.

5 UN Women (2022): *Gender Equality Attitudes Study 2022: The levers for change*.

6 DFID, George Washington Univ., IRC (2019): *What works to prevent violence against women and girls in conflict and humanitarian crisis - Synthesis brief*.



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 (see Glossary entries: Global South/ Global North, Black and white).

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.

In humanitarian settings the realisation of **sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)** and access to appropriate health services is not only about self-determination; it is also about survival. In all, 60 per cent of preventable maternal deaths occur in humanitarian crisis regions.⁷ According to one study, countries with high equality at the household level are more peaceful, more stable and less affected by corruption than those with a high level of gender-specific inequality. In many places, corruption or terrorism is also associated with a patriarchal social system.⁸

The effects of **climate change and loss of biological diversity** pose a disproportionate threat to marginalised and poverty-affected groups. Due to the vulnerability of their situation, children and youths, women, LGBTQI+ persons, people with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples are particularly impacted by droughts and floods, for example. By 2050, an estimated 216 million people will be migrants within their country of origin due to gradual climate change.⁹ In such contexts, women are particularly exposed to sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation and human trafficking.¹⁰ Women and Indigenous Peoples, who are often directly dependent on access to natural resources to meet their basic needs, are therefore severely affected by poor environmental conditions such as air and soil pollution.¹¹

Poverty and hunger also often worsen discrimination against women, girls and others in vulnerable situations, such as people with disabilities, the young and the elderly, informal sector workers and displaced persons. In recent years, the number of people suffering from hunger has increased in both absolute and proportional terms: in 2021, for example, food insecurity affected almost 32 per cent of women and 27.6 per cent of men.¹² An estimated 388 million women and girls lived in extreme poverty in 2022, compared to 372 million men and boys.¹³ Not least, the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts have worsened the economic situation as women and girls suffered a disproportionate share of employment losses or were more likely to have to give up work than men.¹⁴

City-dwellers – a category which, according to projections, will include two-thirds of humanity by 2050 – are increasingly exposed to “urbanisation of poverty”. Women are particularly affected because they may be unable to afford safe transport, lack access to sanitation or have to work under precarious conditions in the informal sector, e.g. in waste disposal. At present, their needs are not being given sufficient consideration in urban and transport planning.

7 UNFPA (2015): *Maternal mortality in humanitarian crises and in fragile settings*.

8 Hudson, Bowen, Nielsen (2020): *The First Political Order: How Sex Shapes Governance and National Security Worldwide*. Columbia University Press.

9 World Bank (2021): *Groundswell Part 2: Acting on Internal Climate Migration*.

10 OHCHR (2022): *Climate change exacerbates violence against women and girls*.

11 UNDP (2022): *Seeds of Change: How Indigenous Women’s Ancestral Knowledge Can Bolster Climate Security* | by Politically Speaking | *Politically Speaking* | Medium and Archer (2020): *Understanding the gendered impacts of air pollution in the world of work*.

12 UN Women (2022): *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2022*.

13 UN Women (2022): *Poverty deepens for women and girls, according to latest projections*.

14 ILO (2022): *World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2022* and Heinrich Böll Foundation (2021): *Hard-Won Progress on Gender Equality Destroyed: The Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis on Women and LGBTQI*.

And lastly, the **worldwide upsurge in right-wing populist and anti-feminist tendencies** poses a major challenge to gender equality. It has been noticeable, in recent years, that governments, political parties, foundations and other actors are taking coordinated action against a supposed “**gender ideology**” to which they are collectively hostile. This well-funded transnational **anti-gender movement** aims to devalue advocacy for gender equality as mere dogma; among other things, it challenges the concept of **gender** and threatens the **sexual and reproductive health and rights** of women and LGBTQI+ persons. The anti-gender movement aims to reverse the existing consensus, as is apparent in relation to the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) and in other international negotiations.¹⁵



Consultation with civil society – the key messages we heard

The BMZ should take decisive action against anti-gender movements. In addition, a common, inclusive language should be developed with other like-minded organisations.

2.2 The potential: equality offers new solutions

These multiple challenges require new solutions. **Women, girls and marginalised groups, as knowledge-bearers and decision-makers, must play a central role in decision-making processes.** This should be accompanied by critical reflection on issues of power, focusing on which knowledge is marginalised and which knowledge is recognised. For example, with their knowledge of the natural environment and habitats, representatives of Indigenous Peoples and local communities have a key role to play in devising fair and equitable solutions for the environment, water resources and climate, in protecting, restoring and sustainably managing biodiversity, and in implementing nature-based solutions. Of all the world’s terrestrial protected areas and ecologically intact landscapes, a significant proportion intersects with lands managed by Indigenous Peoples.¹⁶ And yet those peoples’ knowledge is not being utilised to an adequate extent in the development of solutions.

¹⁵ IPS (2019): *Europe: The neoliberal fuel to the anti-gender movement*.

¹⁶ Garnett, S.T., Burgess, N.D., Fa, J.E. et al. (2018): *A spatial overview of the global importance of Indigenous lands for conservation*. *Nat Sustain* 1, 369–374.

The lack of inclusion of women and marginalised persons as knowledge-bearers is not only an injustice in itself; it also means that potential solutions to global challenges – including social-ecological transformation (just transition) – are being ignored.

Studies show that adequate participation by women and girls in the agricultural sector would increase agricultural productivity and that when women manage the household finances, they are more likely than men to invest in improving their families' nutritional status and health.¹⁷ At present, the difference between men's and women's total expected lifetime earnings is USD 172 trillion, equivalent to twice the world gross domestic product (GDP).¹⁸ Closing the **digital gender gap** in low and lower-middle income countries would make a significant contribution to sustainable **development** and would deliver an estimated USD 524 billion increase in economic activity by 2025.¹⁹

The BMZ is convinced that **systemic change** is necessary in order to realise equality, freedom, human rights and self-determination, to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set forth in **Agenda 2030** and to respond to global crises. What is needed, therefore, is a policy which does more to address the causes of inequalities worldwide and, together with partners, works to transform discriminatory power structures: a feminist development policy.

17 FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO (2019): *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019: Safeguarding against economic slowdowns and downturns*.

18 World Bank (2022): *Women, Business and the Law 2022*.

19 Alliance for Affordable Internet (2021): *The Cost of Exclusion: Economic Consequences of the Digital Gender Gap*. Web Foundation. The report focuses on 32 low and lower-middle income countries (Algeria, Angola, Bangladesh, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, Guinea, Honduras, India, Kenya, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Zambia, Zimbabwe).

3 Rethinking power: A feminist approach to German development policy

Conclusions and parameters of German cooperation

3.1 Working for transformation: effecting systemic change

With its adoption of a feminist development policy, Germany joins a group of countries – Canada, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Luxembourg, Mexico and others – whose stated aim is to pursue a feminist foreign and development policy.²⁰ The Canadian government has been implementing a feminist development policy (Feminist International Assistance Policy) since 2017, with a consistent focus on promoting gender equality, inter alia by providing more support for feminist civil society organisations.²¹

The realisation of human rights and the **human rights-based approach** – including an understanding of marginalised groups as rights-holders – form the basis for our feminist development policy. As duty-bearers, states have a responsibility to fulfil their human rights obligations. However, some governments are opposed to gender equality and the recognition of marginalised groups and are failing to fulfil those obligations.

A feminist development policy aims to ensure that individuals and groups gain access to their rights; it also assists them in claiming these rights and living self-determined lives. Feminist development policy promotes an environment in which women and marginalised persons advocate for the transformation of society as **Agents of Change**. It takes the whole of society to achieve lasting changes in norms and behaviour. It is essential, in this context, to cooperate with men and boys and with religious and traditional leaders and to mobilise their support for social change.

20 In 2014, Sweden became the first country to develop a feminist foreign policy, which was based on the “three Rs” – rights, resources and representation. Since the new Swedish government took office in October 2022, Sweden has ceased to pursue an explicitly feminist foreign policy.

21 In 2020/2021 on average 90 per cent of Canada’s development funding went to measures that target gender equality as a principal or significant objective; see OECD (2023): *Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Donor Charts*.



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.²² 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.

An intersectional approach puts the perspective of the marginalised person or group front and centre and takes into account the interaction of diverse inequalities resulting from different power systems (e.g. racism, classism). Intersectionality is thus a helpful tool in gaining a holistic overview of social inequalities and assists in addressing them.

²² The term "intersectionality" was coined in the late 1980s by Kimberlé Crenshaw, a Professor of Law in the US.



Consultation with civil society – the key messages we heard

The BMZ should confront Germany's colonial past and identify and transform colonial continuities in its current structures. It should also hold regular round tables with partners in the Global South, refrain from including conditionalities in development agreements and strengthen South-South cooperation.

Through its development cooperation, Germany will focus more strongly on implementing **gender-transformative** and **intersectional** approaches which critically analyse gender roles, aim to eliminate gender-related inequalities and look at the overlaps between different forms of discrimination. The **"do no harm" approach** is the minimum standard applicable in all German development policy measures. This means that in dialogue with implementing partners and target groups, we ensure that none of our interventions reinforce existing discriminatory power relations and structures. The safety of all participants is paramount.

The BMZ identifies the **"three Rs"** as core action areas for achieving the goals of a feminist development policy. The BMZ advocates for the **rights** of women and marginalised groups, for their improved access to **resources** and for the strengthening of their **representation** as key elements of equitable participation.

The BMZ's feminist development policy is based on alignment with partners' interests, participation and a **post-colonial, anti-racist understanding of development policy**. We wish to take our co-operation with partner countries forward on the basis of a critical reflection on power relations. Patriarchal norms are prevalent all over the world. However, the status of women and other marginalised groups in law and social practice vary from country to country, as does our partners' political will to initiate change. An **in-depth understanding of the specific context** and **intensive dialogue with partners** are therefore required. Here, the BMZ can build on its experience of cooperating with partner governments in the field of human rights and gender equality. It can link in with the corresponding strategies adopted by partner countries and regional organisations and take the cooperation forward in line with a feminist development policy.

Dialogue with our partner countries is essential in implementing a feminist development policy. The programmes and objectives of development cooperation in the partner countries must therefore be jointly devised, shaped and adapted to the **country context**. When cooperating with partners who have a sceptical or critical attitude towards the objectives and values of feminist development policy, a delicate balancing act is required. In such cases, we are resolute in advocating for our objectives and values, but define the specific approach taken in the country concerned through partnership-based dialogue. Together with the partner government, we are thus able, in some cases, to facilitate smaller-scale but lasting progress on gender equality.



Consultation with civil society – the key messages we heard

The BMZ should promote systems for participation and co-creation by civil society from partner countries and, in particular, involve the youth, feminist civil society, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalised groups in project conceptualisation and implementation and in partner dialogue.

Gender-transformative approaches

The BMZ's feminist development policy relies on gender-transformative approaches in order to achieve the long-term elimination of gender-specific power hierarchies. For this, it is not enough to address the symptoms of gender inequality. Gender-transformative approaches focus on its causes. Examples are discriminatory laws, unequal social norms and practices, discriminatory attitudes, and gender roles and stereotypes arising from patriarchal power relations. Gender-transformative projects critically examine conventional images of masculinity, for example, and involve male stakeholders in this process. In that sense, gender-transformative approaches are distinct from gender-responsive approaches: while the latter systematically integrate the specific needs of the genders into their measures (e. g. by providing childcare facilities during training events), they do not aim to actively transform existing gender-specific inequalities.

The integration of gender-transformative approaches into the planning and delivery of development policy measures is pivotal to the implementation of feminist development policy. Various national, international and European reference texts on gender equality also underline the importance of gender-transformative approaches in development cooperation; the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III is an example.



Consultation with civil society – the key messages we heard

The BMZ should improve access to financial resources for local civil society in partner countries. Mechanisms for more flexible, needs-based and long-term financing of local civil society organisations should be explored and networking opportunities for feminist civil society expanded.

For a feminist development policy, **cooperation with civil society organisations, particularly women’s rights, LGBTQI+ and other human rights organisations**, is key. They are drivers of change. They mobilise social engagement and work to dismantle power structures and gender roles. Local civil society organisations have a clear understanding and essential knowledge of the challenges and opportunities existing at the grassroots level. They are in direct contact with local people and can therefore ensure that the latter’s interests and concerns are heard and addressed.

Despite playing such a significant role in protecting and promoting the rights of marginalised groups, these organisations are chronically underfunded.²³ The 2022 Civil Society Atlas reveals that, globally, feminist civil society organisations and women’s advocacy organisations face the greatest constraints on their freedom of action (**shrinking spaces**).²⁴ And so feminist development policy is in part about seeking to identify appropriate mechanisms and modalities to support local civil society organisations and stakeholders, especially in the Global South.

3.2 Applying a multi-level approach: internal and external, local and global

We will implement our feminist development policy at **multiple levels**: at the portfolio development level, in cooperation with the **international community** and at **institutional level** within the BMZ itself.

At the **portfolio level**, the BMZ is able to link in with other effective approaches and measures and take them forward. Here, a key role is played by the **cross-cutting, cross-sectoral embedding** of the feminist development policy approach in all areas of German development cooperation through the “human rights, gender equality and disability inclusion” quality criterion, currently in preparation (see also Section 3.3).

23 Dolker (2021): *Where is the Money for Feminist Organizing? Data Snapshots and A Call to Action*. Association for Women’s Rights in Development.

24 Brot für die Welt (2022): *Atlas der Zivilgesellschaft 2022* (available in German only).



In aligning its portfolio with feminist development policy, German development cooperation can harness the major potential that exists in sectors such as climate, biodiversity, transport, water, energy and trade. We will also work to embed feminist approaches more firmly at the European and multilateral levels and promote European and multilateral projects on gender equality. We will make optimum use of synergies between bilateral and multilateral approaches to strengthen gender equality in the interests of coherent and effective development cooperation.

As well as anchoring feminist approaches across the board in development cooperation, we will also increase implementation of **focused measures with gender equality as the principle objective** which foreground women and girls in all their **diversity** and specifically aim to eliminate discriminatory norms and structures, **gender roles and stereotypes**. Here too, the BMZ can build on existing engagement, e.g. in the context of ending gender-based violence, promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and empowering women in peace and reconstruction processes in fragile and (post-)conflict settings.

The BMZ will increasingly analyse and evaluate its own work in order to identify effective approaches used in existing projects. An example is the systematic review of effective gender equality interventions in fragile and conflict-related contexts, which was commissioned by the BMZ. The review concludes that development policy measures do not currently address discriminatory social norms and gender roles to an adequate extent.²⁵ The evaluations by the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval) – for example, on the Human Rights Strategy,²⁶ the Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities²⁷ and Supporting Gender Equality in Post-conflict Contexts²⁸ – are other studies that we can build on.

25 Lwamba et al. (2021): *Strengthening women's empowerment and gender equality in fragile contexts towards peaceful and inclusive societies*. 3ie Systematic Review 47.

26 DEval (2021): *Human Rights in German Development Policy. Part 1: The Human Rights Strategy and Its Implementation*.

27 DEval (2017): *Evaluation of the BMZ Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities*.

28 DEval (2021): *Supporting Gender Equality in Post-conflict Contexts*.

Agenda-setting at the international level has an important role to play in realising feminist development policy interests. The topic of gender equality has gained in significance in the international context in recent years. In 2020, 40 years after the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and 25 years after the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, the **Generation Equality Forum** was established as the key multi-stakeholder partnership for the achievement of SDG 5. In the Forum, which is convened by UN Women, Germany has taken on a lead role in the Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights and is also involved in the Action Coalitions on Bodily Autonomy and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and on Gender-Based Violence.

The **European Union** plays a central role in progressing gender equality. The EU Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action 2021-2025 (EU GAP III) established a key strategic foundation and set specific targets for gender equality. Efforts can build in particular on the implementation of the Global Gateway and Team Europe Initiatives²⁹, the systematic use of Country Level Implementation Plans (CLIPS)³⁰ in programming, and the general **mainstreaming** of gender in EU foreign policy. We will make strategic use of the major transformative potential of EU budget support, and the political dialogue that involves with the partner countries concerned, to further feminist development policy.

In working towards feminist development policy objectives, the BMZ will intensify its **cooperation in multilateral organisations and international institutions** and make active use of its role in the multilateral organisations' bodies and supervisory boards. In parallel with the mainstreaming of feminist development policy approaches, this applies particularly to those multilateral organisations that have a clear mandate to set and disseminate standards and that either play a coordinating role in support of feminist development policy objectives within the UN system (principally UN Women) or are able to exert leverage within that system (e.g. UNFPA, UNESCO).

We will also increase our engagement in the **multilateral development banks**. As regards their formulation of institutional targets and gender strategies, for example, we intend to press for a high level of ambition, progressive design and language, binding and measurable qualitative development of the banks' portfolios, and leveraging of private funds. The **OECD**, the **G7** and **G20** and international platforms such as the **Green Climate Fund** are other major international forums in which the BMZ will advocate for a progressive feminist agenda and the promotion of gender equality.

And lastly, at the **institutional level**, we will lead by example and embrace a **learning and change process** which will enable the BMZ as an organisation and its workforce to achieve feminist development policy objectives. We will also encourage the implementing organisations of German development cooperation to initiate these processes within their own structures. The goal is to build practical knowledge of how to work towards social change.

²⁹ With the Global Gateway strategy, the European Union aims to mobilise major private and public investments in order to progress the development of global infrastructure in the digital, climate and energy, transport, health, education and research sectors by 2027 together with partner countries. The Team Europe Initiatives combine the specific activities of the EU, its member states and, where relevant, other donors in these and other thematic areas.

³⁰ As part of the implementation of EU GAP III, country-specific **gender analyses** were updated and **Country Level Implementation Plans (CLIPs)** produced. They are taken into consideration in the preparation of BMZ strategy papers.

We aim to accomplish this realignment towards a feminist development policy on the basis of **coherence with the feminist foreign policy adopted by the Federal Foreign Office (AA)**, including in thematic areas such as sexual and reproductive health and rights, participation in peace and reconstruction processes, ending conflict-related gender-based violence (implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda with the Federal Foreign Office taking lead responsibility) and women's economic empowerment. In international negotiations, the BMZ – together with the Federal Foreign Office and other ministries – will advocate strongly for a feminist approach and defend agreed language against the international anti-gender movement. In the negotiations at EU level, we will advocate for Germany, as a pioneer of equality policy, to lead by example and to contribute to the negotiations at all levels alongside our progressive allies.

For the credibility of our feminist external action, it is important to continue implementing a progressive equality agenda in Germany.³¹ The BMZ will strengthen the dialogue here, principally with the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

3.3 Realignment of development policy: our objectives

The vision of feminist development policy is **equal participation by all people in social, political and economic life** – regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disabilities, migration status, ethnic origin, religion or worldview, or other characteristics. With our development policy, we are working with partners to address the structural causes of inequalities and promote social norms and approaches which enable equal participation by all people. The achievement of these objectives will directly contribute to the implementation of Agenda 2030, the Paris Agreement, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other international commitments.

In order to achieve the overarching aim, which is to eliminate discriminatory power structures, the BMZ has set itself the following goals: realising the rights of women and marginalised groups, promoting their access to resources and strengthening representation (**Action Area 1**); anchoring a feminist approach across the BMZ portfolio (**Action Area 2**); strengthening feminist development policy through international alliances (**Action Area 3**); and further developing our own internal structures and working methods in line with a feminist development policy (**Action Area 4**).

The BMZ's **quality criteria** will be taken into account and incorporated as cross-cutting issues in all the development policy activities implemented under this strategy. Quality criteria are what marks out the BMZ's development cooperation as value-based, sustainable and forward-looking. There are currently six quality criteria (human rights, gender equality and disability inclusion; poverty reduction and inequality reduction; environmental and climate impact assessment; digital technology; anti-corruption and integrity; conflict sensitivity), whose strategic parameters and requirements are set out in policy documents. The quality criteria of key importance to the mainstreaming of feminist policy objectives within the portfolio are "human rights, gender equality and disability inclusion" and "poverty reduction and inequality reduction".

Feminist development policy must be underpinned by financial resources over the medium and long term. More targeted alignment of **official development assistance (ODA)** with the feminist agenda is a key building block here. The BMZ is responsible for the major share of German ODA funding and therefore serves as an important role model for other German government ministries. The BMZ sets itself ambitious objectives in this area (see Section 4.2).

31 BMFSFJ (2020): *Towards a Stronger Future. The Federal Government's Gender Equality Strategy*.

4 The future parameters of Germany's development policy in the various action areas

Strategic policy orientations

Feminist development policy is the BMZ's guiding vision and applies on a cross-sectoral basis for all regions and instruments of German development policy. It serves as the frame of reference for the activities of the organisations which implement German development cooperation and should also provide guidance for the BMZ's grant recipients³². In order to achieve its stated development policy objectives, the BMZ will implement its feminist development policy in four action areas.

4.1 Rights, resources and representation – strengthening the “three Rs” in German development cooperation (Action Area 1)

Strengthening **rights**, eliminating discriminatory laws and norms, equal access to **resources**, equal **representation** and increased opportunities to exert influence are key factors for just, resilient, sustainable and peaceful societies which leave no one behind. The “three Rs” are the key starting points for the BMZ's feminist development policy. The implementing organisations have a central role to play in developing the first action area. The BMZ encourages its implementing organisations to systematically integrate the strengthening of the “three Rs” into programme planning and delivery.

³² Grant recipients are recipients of federal funds (grants) which are made available by the Federal Government to non-governmental bodies for the implementation of their development projects.

4.1.1 Rights

The BMZ works with partner governments in order to eliminate **discriminatory laws** and norms and strengthen rights and access to justice for women and marginalised groups.

- The BMZ promotes **access to justice for women and marginalised groups**, as well as their active involvement in non-discriminatory law-making processes. Among other things, the BMZ assists partner countries in developing **gender-equitable laws and equality legislation** and provides support for the **application of the law** by the administration and judiciary. Furthermore, the BMZ supports access to justice for these women and marginalised groups through the targeted provision of legal information and the removal of legal and social barriers. Its advice is based on the people-centred justice model³³ and, depending on the context, supports the formal judicial system or informal dispute resolution mechanisms – the aim being to facilitate *effective* access to justice for women and marginalised groups.
- The BMZ is strengthening its engagement for the removal of social barriers which prevent girls, women and LGBTQI+ persons in all their diversity from knowing and claiming their **sexual and reproductive rights**. In order to realise the right to high-quality, needs-based **health services**, the BMZ will continue to strengthen the partner countries' health systems, including sexual and reproductive health and mental health.
- The BMZ advocates for the realisation of the rights of survivors of **sexual and gender-based violence** and for the provision of holistic, stress- and trauma-sensitive support to them, based on a survivor-centred approach. German development cooperation also contributes to the **prevention of all forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices**, offline and online. As corruption perpetuates gender-specific inequality, the BMZ also supports partner countries in transforming social norms that are associated with discrimination and corruption.
- The BMZ advocates for the **right to education and lifelong learning** for girls and women. Education is one of the most important bases for social, economic and political self-determination and participation; it also strengthens peaceful social cohesion. Education can also be gender-transformative if it counteracts harmful gender norms and helps every individual to develop their full potential, regardless of their gender.



Consultation with civil society – the key messages we heard

In order to realise the **rights** of women and marginalised groups, the BMZ should promote reforms of discriminatory laws and policies and advocate for protection of the rights of women and marginalised groups in international organisations and strategies on trade, climate policy and employment promotion.

³³ People-centred justice (PCJ) – in contrast to an institution-centred approach – foregrounds people and their legal problems and seeks to identify suitable methods for their resolution on this basis.

- The BMZ advocates for the **removal of legal barriers which restrict women’s choice of occupation and economic opportunities**. This includes safeguarding access to water and land rights and to natural resources, property and financial services, and promoting equal rights in inheritance law and employment. It also includes closing legal loopholes in national laws and practices in the area of **care work**, as well as affordable access to social security and health services, particularly maternity, paternity, parental and other care-related leave, childcare and long-time care services.
- The BMZ advocates for universally accessible, safe and inclusive digital space. By supporting gender-transformative regulations for information and communication technology, the BMZ promotes respect for women’s rights in the digital and analog space.
- In many countries, the **human rights of LGBTQI+ persons** are under threat and their safety is at risk. Equal rights and legal equality, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, are inalienable human rights which the BMZ is working to promote.
- German development cooperation supports women, children, young people and other marginalised groups in making use of non-formal education services (e.g. adult education) in order to inform themselves about human rights and to claim these rights from the state.
- The BMZ promotes a human rights-based approach in the context of nature conservation and natural resource management. Here, **access to land rights and land use for Indigenous Peoples³⁴ and local communities** plays an important role. This also includes implementation of the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). The establishment of effective grievance mechanisms is particularly relevant here.



34 With the ratification of the 1989 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO C-169), Germany reaffirmed its commitment to the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

4.1.2 Resources

German development cooperation improves **access to and control over resources** for women, girls and marginalised groups and individuals in the partner countries.

- The BMZ supports gender-equitable access to (school and vocational) **education**, the formal **labour market and decent work** on the basis of the core labour standards developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO). It specifically promotes female entrepreneurs and women-led businesses, their access to (international) markets, and women's participation in training, reskilling and professional development programmes, with a particular focus on green jobs (green skills). To that end, the BMZ also leverages targeted investment and mobilises private sector engagement to boost gender equality in the labour market. In relation to paid care work, the BMZ works to strengthen the care sector and to protect labour migrants from exploitation.
- The BMZ promotes the development of **social protection systems** which facilitate women's equal access to social protection, including in humanitarian settings, protect against gender-specific life risks and improve women's access to the labour market, income and education. A key building block here is the **removal of gender-specific inequalities in unpaid care work**.
- The BMZ advocates for equal access to **general health services** for everyone. In societies with high levels of gender-specific inequality, in particular, women and LGBTQI+ persons lack equal access to basic care, but also to specialised care for the treatment of diseases or accidents, for example. The BMZ will continue to build the resilience of **sexual and reproductive health services** (including access to comprehensive sexuality education, family planning, safe abortion, and pre- and post-natal care, including during childbirth) as part of its efforts to strengthen health systems and remove financial barriers. Measures to remove the taboos around menstruation and to promote **menstrual health and hygiene** are also pivotal.



Consultation with civil society – the key messages we heard

With regard to access to **resources**, German feminist development policy should expand networking opportunities for feminist civil society (movement building) and promote non-discriminatory, high-quality and affordable health services for women and marginalised groups.



- The BMZ is working to ensure that women's rights organisations and self-advocacy organisations of Indigenous Peoples and local communities are better resourced, involved in key decision-making processes and have easier access to climate finance. As part of the just transition approach, the BMZ is working to ensure that the profits from a social-ecological economy are shared in a way which also benefits Indigenous Peoples and local communities at the grassroots level.
- In the provision of **financial protection against climate risks** under the Global Shield against Climate Risks, the BMZ advocates for the implementation of feminist approaches and for consideration to be given to key vulnerability factors such as age, gender identity, disabilities, individual legal status and others.
- The BMZ advocates for direct financial mechanisms whose stated aim is to empower Indigenous Peoples and local communities and strengthen relevant initiatives.
- The BMZ advocates for food security and food sovereignty, better access to land and land ownership for women, and decent and fair working conditions in global supply chains. It will increasingly advocate for protection for local farmers, particularly in remote regions, under free trade agreements.
- German development cooperation strengthens **women's access to the formal financial system**, including in conflict and humanitarian settings.
- German development cooperation specifically promotes access to resilient, inclusive and gender-equitable **water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)** in public institutions.
- The BMZ advocates for a gender-equitable **digital transformation** and the closing of the digital gender gap in order to safeguard digital inclusion for everyone. To that end, digital goods and services in the education, employment, business and health sectors will be made accessible to women and girls.

4.1.3 Representation

The BMZ strengthens **full, equal and meaningful participation** of women and marginalised groups and their role as decision-makers in key social, political and economic decision-making processes at all levels.

- The BMZ advocates for women and marginalised groups in the partner countries to be represented fairly in **political and corporate decision-making bodies** and in local and regional planning and budgeting processes. This applies, for example, to representatives of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, children and youth, and people with disabilities.
- The BMZ supports inclusive and gender-equitable rule-of-law structures and policy planning and decision-making processes, including in fragile and (post-) conflict societies. As well as supporting political participation, this includes **strengthening the role and representation of women in the administration and judiciary** and building the capacities of local and national institutions to promote gender equality.
- In European and multilateral climate and environmental funds and their constituencies and in climate alliances, the BMZ will actively advocate for gender parity in appointments to decision-making bodies.
- The BMZ supports an enabling environment for women in relation to globally and socially just and environmentally sustainable **economic and tax systems**, also in the context of international trade policy, in order to facilitate a social-ecological transformation of the economy for everyone. This includes the stronger alignment of **financial and non-financial services** with women's needs, close cooperation with partners on gender equality, inter alia by mainstreaming commitments on compliance with international gender equality conventions, and advocating for trade and gender equality issues to be addressed in EU trade policy.
- With the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the BMZ advocates for equal participation by women worldwide in **peace processes, reconstruction, dealing with the past, conflict analysis and reintegration**. The BMZ also specifically promotes equal participation by women in social, political and economic life in contexts of displacement, expulsion and migration.



Consultation with civil society – the key messages we heard

In strengthening **representation**, the BMZ should advocate for initiatives which promote participation by women and marginalised groups at all levels in consultation processes, advisory bodies and committees; it should also improve opportunities for civil society to be involved in international conferences. Organisations from the Global South should make it a priority to promote initiatives and actors that create non-discriminatory and barrier-free safe spaces.

- The BMZ initiates and supports **national and international advocacy groups and networks** which work for equal (economic) participation by women, including in sectors which mainly employ women, where they have an important voice on social issues such as the rights of women and LGBTIQ+ persons, diversity of opinion and basic democratic values.
- The BMZ supports a gender-equitable approach to **digital transformation**. This includes strengthening the representation and role of women in the development and use of digital technologies and in shaping decision-making processes in the digital policy field.

4.2 Anchoring a feminist approach across the BMZ portfolio, targeted promotion of gender equality (Action Area 2)

The BMZ will continue to develop its portfolio and align it in qualitative terms with feminist development policy, with a stronger focus on the embedding of gender-transformative and intersectional approaches³⁵ and participation by local actors and target groups throughout the project cycle. The BMZ is working to ensure that its implementing organisations also integrate feminist core elements into their work.

- **By 2025**, the BMZ will double the **proportion of new project funding commitments for measures** with the principal objective of gender equality, taking it to 8 per cent. The proportion of new project funding for measures where gender equality is a significant objective will **be increased** to 85 per cent. The expansion of gender equality-focused projects will take place – in consultation with partners and with due consideration of the country context – across all regions and sectors.

³⁵ This applies both to measures whose principal objective is to support gender equality (GE2) and also to measures in which gender equality is a significant objective (GE1).



- Together with partners, the BMZ is rolling out **gender-transformative approaches** in its projects and programmes and thus supports the reform of discriminatory social structures and norms. Society at large should be involved in the critical appraisal of power relations and gender norms. Men and boys, male decision-makers or local, traditional and religious authorities should also be addressed on a targeted basis as key Agents of Change.
- Together with partners, the BMZ is increasingly embedding within its projects and programmes an **intersectional perspective**, which looks at the ways various forms of discrimination overlap and interact with each other. Child and youth rights and the inclusion of youths and young adults have a key role to play here. As part of the intersectional approach, the BMZ will work with its partners, among other things, to further advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities, e.g. by hosting the 2025 Global Disability Summit. The BMZ will also consistently implement the Federal Government's **LGBTI Inclusion Strategy** for foreign policy and development cooperation.
- The BMZ calls on the **implementing organisations** of German development cooperation to review the formats and opportunities available to facilitate **participation by local civil society**, particularly feminist civil society, throughout the project cycle, and provides targeted support for relevant initiatives.
- The BMZ and the implementing organisations are striving to improve the **evidence base for feminist development policy** and use it systematically for policy development and implementation. To that end, the BMZ will commission analyses and studies and ensure that they are aligned with feminist principles³⁶ in order to continuously improve feminist development policy. In addition, the BMZ will advocate for topics of relevance to feminist development policy to be given due consideration in the DEval evaluation programme. In parallel, a feminist approach to data is also aimed at making power structures visible and promoting the data sovereignty of marginalised groups, as well as encouraging the use of data for budgeting, interest representation and research from a feminist perspective.
- The BMZ collects and is making greater use of **gender data** that capture the lived realities of women and marginalised groups by applying criteria such as intersectionality and addressing gender-specific issues on a disaggregated basis, thus preventing the reproduction of stereotypes in data-gathering. Wherever possible, efforts are made to build the statistical and data analysis capacities of relevant partner institutions in order to mainstream the approach of collecting and using gender data for inclusive policy-making.

³⁶ Feminist evaluation principles include a focus on the causes of gender inequality, participatory methods of data collection and analysis, and accessible sharing of evaluation results; see OECD (2022): *Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls: Guidance for Development Partners*.

4.3 Building international alliances (Action Area 3)

In order to strengthen feminist policies and agendas, develop a common understanding of feminist development policy and further strengthen the “three Rs”, it is important to find strong allies and build feminist alliances at the international level.

→ The BMZ consistently integrates a feminist perspective into its **discussions with partner governments** (including government negotiations) and systematically advocates for the elimination of discriminatory structures in the context of cooperation, taking country-specific contexts and priorities into account in each case.

→ The BMZ recognises the unequal power relations which mean that the countries of the Global North decisively shape the multilateral system. The BMZ is working for greater inclusion of the countries of the Global South in the **multilateral system**. At the same time, in its cooperation with multilateral organisations, the BMZ aims to eliminate discriminatory power structures within societies.

→ The BMZ is developing effective counter-arguments to the narratives of the anti-gender movement in order to join broad alliances in confronting the pushback against gender equality and the realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights. With that in mind, the BMZ is also engaged in dialogue formats with like-minded states in order to speak with one voice on these issues.



- The BMZ actively seeks alliances in **multilateral forums, development banks, funds and working groups** and advocates for feminist development policy and approaches in these contexts. In doing so, the BMZ also makes use of international institutions' convening power in order to mobilise support for feminist development policy among member countries. The BMZ advocates for the implementation and rollout of relevant strategies, for **mainstreaming** in international organisations and multilateral development banks, and for women's equal representation in management and decision-making bodies. The BMZ is also working to ensure that more women are seconded to leading positions in international organisations and bodies.
- In the **governance of multilateral organisations**, Germany is working inter alia in supervisory bodies to secure more resources, set more ambitious targets and achieve measurable impacts for gender equality. This should also be accompanied by support measures. When filling key positions in the multilateral organisations, well-qualified female applicants should be given particular consideration.
- In particular, the BMZ intends to strengthen organisations within the multilateral framework which have a mandate and exert leverage for feminist development policy in the **UN system** (including UN Women and UNFPA). The BMZ engages with structural change processes and supports the UN Gender Review as part of "Our Common Agenda". It aims to realise gender equality within the system while also making it every institution's responsibility. The independent review will be accompanied by policy recommendations which must be implemented across the UN system under UN Women's leadership. The BMZ will closely monitor and support this process.
- The BMZ will maintain its firm commitment to gender equality in the **G7 and G20 contexts**, in the **Generation Equality Forum** and in the **Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi)**.
- The BMZ will strengthen its cooperation with like-minded **EU member states**, with the **European Parliament** and with **civil society** in EU member states and partner countries in order to contribute to achieving the GE1 and GE2 targets of the **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI-GE)** and the **EU Gender Action Plan III**. Furthermore, together with other ministries, the BMZ advocates for gender equality to be addressed in Council negotiations in line with feminist development policy. Participation in Team Europe Initiatives and the Global Gateway should be expanded and equality embedded as a principal or significant objective. The BMZ encourages the European Commission to ensure that equality is promoted in development cooperation, particularly, and explicitly via the instrument of EU budget support (including gender budgeting).
- In order to further harness the potential of feminist development policy, the BMZ is building international **dialogue formats** for the sharing of experience and makes increasing use of "communities of practice", such as the EU member states' working group on gender-transformative approaches.



- Within the **Justice Action Coalition**, an international coalition set up in 2021 to champion improved access to justice within the SDG 16 framework, the BMZ advocates for access to justice for women and marginalised groups.
- The BMZ makes a major contribution to the implementation of the **German Federal Government’s Third Action Plan on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda 2021 to 2024**, including participation by women and LGBTQI+ persons in conflict prevention, peace processes and reconstruction. In this context, the BMZ works consistently to increase their participation at international, regional and bilateral level.
- In the legal instruments governing **corporate due diligence obligations** at national and European level, the BMZ advocates for **respect for human rights and the protection of environmental interests** at all stages of global supply chains. This particularly includes better access to justice (legal redress and improved grievance mechanisms).
- The BMZ aims for gender parity and diversity in the German delegations to **global conferences**. It also strives for the formal inclusion of feminist partners in German delegations as accompanying representatives from civil society. As a general principle, the BMZ is only willing to participate in panel events at global conferences if there is adequate representation of women.
- The BMZ is working to enable the knowledge, experience and solutions provided by feminist **civil society, women’s networks, women’s rights movements, LGBTQI+ organisations and human rights defenders** in the Global South to be integrated into political and economic decision-making processes.
- The BMZ is expanding its cooperation with initiatives led by Indigenous and local representatives in order to strengthen the interests of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, particularly in the fields of biodiversity conservation and climate action.

- The BMZ’s cooperation with the **private sector** – both in multi-stakeholder partnerships and in development partnerships – is guided by the vision of feminist development policy. For example, the BMZ will broaden the range of support it offers for gender diversity management in companies in the Global South. The BMZ will also continue to be involved in the global Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) and will engage in dialogue with donors and international organisations on the latest developments of relevance to women’s economic empowerment.

4.4 Leading by example – an institution fit to deliver (Action Area 4)

A feminist development policy is only credible and workable if it is accompanied by a continuous learning, growth and adjustment process in relation to internal structures, processes and working methods. Identifying and addressing entrenched power inequalities here is an essential basis for the implementation of feminist development policy. This must include an in-depth reflection on the attitudes, prejudices and beliefs of employees and on the working methods applied in the cooperation with partners. Only then is it possible to avoid reproducing and institutionalising existing power inequalities. The BMZ is applying the following measures and encourages its implementing organisations to pursue a parallel learning process in their own structures, processes and working methods:

- The BMZ is reviewing its **system of contact persons and human resources** with a view to implementing a feminist development policy.

- Through new and adapted **training policies**, the BMZ is building its employees' skills in relation to the core elements of a feminist, post-colonial and anti-racist development policy and sensitises them to relevant topics. This includes raising awareness, developing application-oriented and practical skills and promoting institutional knowledge (making best practices visible).
- The BMZ is adopting measures to actively promote **diversity, equal opportunities, participation and skills** within its own structures. This includes gender-equitable staff selection, promotion of a diverse workforce, increased representation of marginalised groups, a permanent assurance of gender parity, including at management level, and strengthening the BMZ's role as a family-friendly and inclusive employer.
- The BMZ is committed to **making** events **inclusive and gender-equitable** and works to ensure that event formats in which the BMZ's leadership is involved comply with these standards.
- The BMZ promotes a working environment that is free from exclusion and discrimination, and operates a **zero tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment** in the workplace.
- The BMZ is working to ensure that the **knowledge and experience of local employees are harnessed to a greater extent in the German implementing organisations**. For that purpose, the BMZ will ascertain how existing barriers can be dismantled, e.g. through language criteria.
- In its planning and strategic processes, the BMZ is giving more consideration to diverse **civil society perspectives from the Global South** and is strengthening the role of local stakeholders.
- When producing the quality criteria strategy for the BMZ's "human rights, gender equality and disability inclusion" quality criterion, the BMZ will review **existing instruments and guidelines for programme planning and implementation** in the light of feminist development policy and will update them where necessary. This includes updating the content of gender analyses (e.g. assessing the production of country-specific, portfolio-wide gender analyses) and the revision of the guidelines for the gender equality policy marker.
- The BMZ makes increasing use of **triangular cooperation** in order to build horizontal partnerships. In the context of triangular cooperation, the feminist development policy approach will be incorporated into a practical structure for shared learning and shared responsibility.
- The BMZ will devise **new strategies** in line with a feminist development policy; it will also review existing strategies and progress their implementation.
- The BMZ is assessing direct participation formats and **mechanisms for the funding of local civil society**, grassroots organisations and (human rights) activists.
- The BMZ actively advocates for intensive **whole-of-government dialogue**, particularly with the German Federal Foreign Office, in order to safeguard the coherence of feminist, human rights-based approaches in external trade.

5 Measuring success

The present strategy is not time-limited and will apply to the BMZ and its implementing organisations with immediate effect after publication. The implementation of the objectives formulated in this strategy requires the systematic and consistent involvement of all the work units of the BMZ and the official implementing organisations and is only possible on the basis of close cooperation with our partners founded on a relationship of trust.

Various monitoring and evaluation tools will be applied in order to determine the status and level of progress achieved in implementing the strategy and to measure its impacts:

→ **Increased share of financial resources to promote gender equality in the partner countries:** The BMZ has set itself the goal of increasing the proportion of new project funding to promote gender equality to a total of 93 per cent by 2025 (see Section 4.2). This will be reviewed using the OECD gender equality policy marker (GE marker). Earmarked contributions to multilateral organisations will be included in that figure.

- **Impact of development policy measures:** Monitoring of the impact of development policy measures will be conducted within the framework of the BMZ's new Gender Action Plan, which is based on this strategy. The Gender Action Plan will be published during the second half of 2023. It will define thematic priorities and elaborate on the objectives of this strategy by formulating more detailed **targets and actions**, including a system for impact assessment. The Gender Action Plan thus ensures transparency in the implementation of the feminist development policy and safeguards accountability, not only towards project partners in the Global South but also for civil society actors at national and international level. The BMZ's Gender Action Plan thus makes a key contribution to identifying the impacts of the feminist development policy. The BMZ will also ensure that relevant findings are included in the evaluation of the EU GAP III and the development of the follow-up action plan from 2026.
- **Implementing the BMZ's internal objectives-** The success of goal attainment will be assessed, inter alia, via the new BMZ Gender Equality Plan (2023–2026) and within the framework of the BMZ's new Gender Action Plan.



→ **Monitoring and evaluation:** The transformation of structures, laws, norms and gender roles and stereotypes is a long-term task and measuring progress is challenging. Some countries have introduced new feminist approaches to measure changes in social norms or have adopted new elements of feminist evaluation, but there is still a substantial need to develop feminist monitoring and evaluation tools. The BMZ will therefore make increased use of evaluations and analyses and aims to support work on new quantitative and qualitative feminist monitoring and evaluation methods. The OECD “Good practice in applying a Human Rights and Gender Equality lens to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria”³⁷ guidance is intended to serve as a frame of reference for capturing results and formulating goals in country strategies and programmes of development cooperation. The BMZ will also utilise the dialogue with the EU and multilateral organisations that are already working on a monitoring system for feminist core elements (e.g. the European Commission as part of the monitoring and evaluation of the Team Europe Initiatives, and UNFPA and UNICEF on changing social norms in the context of female genital mutilation).

After the publication of the strategy and the BMZ’s Gender Action Plan, which builds on it, the BMZ will conduct a portfolio analysis and collect relevant data. This will then produce a baseline. The BMZ will hold regular meetings with its implementing organisations (primarily GIZ and KfW) in order to discuss implementation progress, possible challenges and any unidentified potential. In 2025, the BMZ will conduct a process of reflection on the progress achieved with the strategy’s implementation and measure its success.

³⁷ OECD (2022): Good practice in applying a Human Rights and Gender Equality lens to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria. Currently in preparation (unpublished).

Glossary

Ableism	Ableism is prejudice and/or discrimination against people with disabilities. It can take a variety of forms: ableism may mean that people with disabilities are defined solely by their physical or cognitive abilities; it may specifically emphasise the person’s potential “despite” their disability; it may ignore specific needs; or it may convey a sense of superiority on the part of the non-disabled.
Agenda 2030	The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at a 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 objectives for achieving decent lives for all the world’s people while preserving natural resources for the long term. Agenda 2030 calls on all countries to act in an environmentally compatible, socially just and economically efficient manner.
Agents of Change	Agents of Change promote and enable constructive transformation processes. They perform a particularly valuable role in conflict and crisis settings, where they can facilitate decision-making.
Anti-gender movement	The transnational anti-gender movement has grown particularly over the last decade and is hostile to what it refers to as “gender ideology” (see Glossary entry: Gender Ideology); it targets the rights of women and LGBTQI+ persons, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and civil society organisations that are active in this field. The movement consists of various state and non-state actors, most of them right-wing, right-wing populist or Christian fundamentalist. As an example of their activity, they lobby at EU and UN level against the embedding of an inclusive understanding of gender in official texts.
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; and Text Box: Post-colonial and anti-racist development policy).
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).
Black	Black is often used as a self-descriptor by people of African origin, the African diaspora and the anti-racism movement. The word Black is capitalised intentionally in order to signal that it does not refer to skin colour or a biological characteristic but to the lived experience of racism in a predominantly white society (see Glossary entry: White). Another example of a self-descriptor is Black, Indigenous and people of colour (BIPOC), which in Germany is used by persons who are read as Asian, Arab or Turkish, as well as by Roma.
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.
Classism	Classism is a form of discrimination which involves exclusion and disadvantage based on people’s socioeconomic status. Classist patterns of thought and behaviour lead to oppression based on actual or assumed social origin and status. This form of discrimination affects persons of lower socioeconomic status and extends beyond prejudice. Like sexism and racism, for example, classism is socially and structurally embedded.
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 (see Text Box: Post-colonial and anti-racist development policy).
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 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	See Text Box: Many feminisms, one common feature
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), LGBTQI+ rights and anti-racism 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 identity).
Gender digital divide	The gender digital divide refers to the gender divide in access to and use of digital technologies. It is particularly large in low- and middle-income countries: here, 264 million fewer women than men use mobile internet. The digital gender gap does not only affect access and use; it also extends into the areas of digital skills, employment and entrepreneurship in the digital industry.
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 identity	Gender identity is the profound, innate and personal conception of oneself as belonging to one gender, several or none. This perceived gender may or may not correlate with the sex assigned at birth (see Glossary entry: Sex). Female, male, trans, non-binary, inter and queer are examples of gender identity.
Gender ideology	The term “gender ideology” is often used by right-wing populist and anti-feminist movements to discredit advocacy for gender equality, gender mainstreaming or sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Its purpose is to devalue and delegitimise these demands as “ideology”. “Gender” is a concept to which they are collectively hostile. The term “gender ideology” emerged in the 1990s as a counter-response by Catholic groups to the inclusion of “gender” in international negotiations for the first time at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna (1992), the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo (1994) and the World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995).
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	The purpose of gender-transformative approaches is to bring about sustainable change in the gender inequalities that are the result of patriarchal power relations. To that end, gender norms and binarisms are critically analysed. The approaches aim to raise society’s awareness of the drivers of inequalities in order, on this basis, to transform harmful norms, practices and stereotypes (see Text Box: Gender-transformative approaches).
Global North / Global South	The terms “Global North” and “Global South” are not used in a geographical sense, but refer to a country’s privileged or disadvantaged political, economic and cultural status in the global context. For historical reasons, countries of the Global South occupy a socially, politically and economically disadvantaged position within the global system, whereas countries in the Global North are, accordingly, in a favourable position. The terminology also highlights inequality and resulting relationships of dependency. The terms are intended to replace the outdated concepts of “the Third World” and “developing countries”; however, the concepts of “Global North” and “Global South” have also attracted criticism as they are Eurocentric categories (see Text Box: Post-colonial and anti-racist development policy). In this paper, “Global South” means the countries on the OECD-DAC List of ODA Recipients.
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	See Text Box: Intersectionality
Leave no one behind	Leave no one behind (LNOB) is the core pledge made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations. All member states undertake to leave no one behind and thus to focus particularly on addressing the needs of marginalised persons and groups. To that end, it is essential to eliminate discriminatory laws, policies and social norms that undermine people's rights and limit their capacity for action.
LGBTQI+	The abbreviation "LGBTQI+" 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. LGBTQI+ 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 areas such as gender equality (gender mainstreaming), inclusion of persons with disabilities, and action against HIV/AIDS. 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 (see Textbox: Women and marginalised groups in all their diversity).
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	See Text Box: Post-colonial and anti-racist development policy
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).
Sexism	Sexism is a form of discrimination based on a person's sex or gender. It often takes the form of prejudice and unequal treatment, but it can also include oppression and mental and physical abuse. In patriarchal structures in particular, men are generally assigned a higher status. Sexism goes further than this and may include the demeaning and devaluing of all persons with feminine traits; it can also affect queer and trans persons.
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, pansexual, asexual).
Shrinking spaces	"Shrinking spaces" refers to the increasing constraints on civil society's freedom of action worldwide. Measures range from restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly to bans on civil society organisations. In extreme cases, members of social movements or organisations are criminalised, threatened or even murdered.

White/whiteness	The terms “white/whiteness” do not refer to a biological characteristic or an actual skin colour but denote characteristics and experiences which are generally associated with belonging to a white majority society. Over the course of history, whiteness and the normalisation of white ethnic identity have created a culture in which non-white people are regarded as inferior, unusual or as (negatively connoted) “others”. Being white means having advantages, privileges and power. For example, white people are regarded as the norm and are privileged in that they do not have to deal with racism. White/whiteness is thus a political and social construct which reflects the unequal power relations and privileged (social, political and cultural) position of white people in society.
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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ADDRESSES OF THE BMZ OFFICES

→ BMZ Bonn

Dahlmannstraße 4

53113 Bonn

Tel. +49 228 99535-0

Fax +49 228 9910535-3500

→ BMZ Berlin

Stresemannstraße 94 (Europahaus)

10963 Berlin

Tel. +49 30 18535-0

Fax +49 228 9910535-3500