# GAP III Structured dialogue

Online meeting held 1 December 2022

**Report**

## Table of contents

## I.    Introduction and methodology

The Policy Forum on Development, in cooperation with DG INTPA, hosted an online dialogue with 125 civil society organisations (CSOs) and associations of local authorities (ALAs). Set-up by the EU gender action plan (GAP III), this second structured dialogue focused on the country-level implementation of the GAP III; intersectional approaches; and gender equality in the digital transformation. Speakers included representatives from the EU, EU Member States (MS), local authorities and CSOs. There were opportunities for participants to contribute and ask questions, including through Slido and in the breakout group discussions.

## II.    Opening

The moderator Dr Elsa Zekeng welcomed participants and invited them to indicate which country they were joining from via Slido and share their thoughts on the main challenge to achieving gender equality (see Annex 2 for all Slido responses).

Jutta Urpilainen, EU Commissioner for International Partnerships, opened the meeting. The GAP III structured dialogue is timely, as severe threats to gender equality worldwide, including Russia's aggression in Ukraine and the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, are putting all sustainable development goals at risk. The objective is to collectively reverse this to achieve a gender equal world and the EU is ready to continue leading these efforts. Commissioner Urpilainen gave three key messages. First, the EU is on track to make visible progress with the GAP. In 2021, 70 % of all EU actions promoted gender equality. Examples of new targeted actions are: a EUR 70 million flagship programme in Tanzania, helps women fighting gender-based violence (GBV) and promotes their economic empowerment and political participation; and Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) in Kenya, South Africa and Nepal aim to bridge the digital divide and ensure digital rights for all. Thanks to the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, in 2021 over 1.6 million women and girls accessed GBV services.  Second, engaging with CSO and LA is essential to effectively implementing the GAP III, moving forward women's rights at local level and translating international commitments into change on the ground. Third, in 2021 EU funding to women's rights organisations (WROs) and movements increased by about 27 %. A new global Youth and Women in Democracy Initiative is under preparation to strengthen the voice and impact of WROs and women activists. The renewal of the Framework Partnership Agreements is another milestone for EU targeted support to women's movements. Partnerships go beyond funding; dialogue is crucial. Engagement and consultation of CS and LAs has enabled EU delegations (EUDs) to set up ambitious country-level implementation plans (CLIPs) for gender equality. Strengthening engagement is the purpose of the structured dialogue; an opportunity to take stock, share lessons learned, and develop strategic partnerships for a gender-equal world.

## III.    Setting the scene – gender equality in a global context

**Stella Ronner Grubačić,** EU Ambassador for Gender and Diversity, explained that a key priority is to mainstream gender in both internal and external EU actions, as the EU must lead by example. GAP III is a comprehensive framework that combines gender mainstreaming with targeted actions and political dialogue, with a focus on intersectionality and reaching the most disadvantaged women. Its six priority areas incorporate Women, Peace and Security objectives. Part of leading by example is working hand in hand with CS. However, ensuring women's voices are heard by decision makers is becoming more difficult in the face of the changing security context, escalating conflicts, and emerging security challenges including climate change, food insecurity, pandemics, forced migration and risks associated with new technologies. There is also a backlash against gender equality, women's rights and diversity in various parts of the world, including an anti-gender narrative and targeting sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR). The concepts of gender and gender equality have been attacked and framed as western notions, incompatible with so-called traditional values. Women human rights defenders,

journalists and those who are politically active are victims of increasing reprisals, hate speech, smear campaigns and violence, online and offline. To protect human rights and hard-won gains for gender equality we need to build strong alliances, share experiences, support and learn from each other.

**Teresa Lišková,** Czech ambassador to the Political and Security Committee, summarised Czech EU Presidency priorities and achievements in promoting gender equality. The Council conclusions on women, peace and security were adopted on 14 November and the Czech Presidency contributed to the orange day international campaign for the elimination of violence against women. There is a need to respond clearly and strongly to the Ukraine crisis and deteriorating situations in Afghanistan, Iran and elsewhere in the world, as well as provide systemic support. In development cooperation the Czech Presidency systematically promotes a human rights-based approach, with an emphasis on women and girls. It is paying special attention to women human rights defenders, including meeting with young advocates from third countries and a series of events for the month of human rights. Council conclusions on the Youth Action Plan were adopted on 29 November. The Czech Republic is participating in TEIs and encourages the full accomplishment of gender equality, women's rights and empowerment targets under the NDICI – Global Europe. CS is key to promoting democracy and human rights and supporting women and girls, particularly in times of crisis. The Czech Republic and upcoming Swedish Presidency will continue to support this agenda.

**Maria Betânia Ávila**, Director SOS Corpo – Instituto Feminista para a Democracia, Articulación Feminista Marcosur, Brazil, spoke about the role of plural movements of organised women in struggles for democracy. Women's participation is central to democracy, which is not only a political system but a way of organising social life. Threats to democracy are a global problem with unique forms in each region. They include the climate crisis, which is directly linked to inequality and poverty. Feminist movements reaffirm that care for life must be central to the organisation of the economy, aligned with policies on employment, education and digital inclusion. Democracy is also threatened by patriarchal, racist and colonial domination as well as fundamentalist and conservative ideologies, making it urgent to defend the secular state, reproductive and sexual rights, for women and LGBTIQ+ people.

**Claudia Lawson**, Youth activist and SRHR advocate, Ghana, spoke about four main interlinked challenges faced by young women with regards to gender equality: harmful gender norms and stereotypes; low education levels; GBV; and underrepresentation in politics. She highlighted some positive examples of how young women and girls are responding to these challenges, including: youth-led projects; the African Women Leadership Network; affirmative action bills; and engaging men and boys. These were followed by recommendations to the EU: i) Funding: continue to invest in gender equality and prioritise funding for projects. EUDs should allocate specific and ambitious funding envelopes to gender equality, including for sensitive topics such as SRHR; ii) Support progressive policy reforms in partner countries, including on SRHR, ensuring that women- and youth-led organisations are included; iii) Prioritise political and financial support for local women's organisations and youth groups.

## IV.    GAP III after two years of implementation

### 1.   GAP III implementation: process to date, main results and the road ahead (powerpoint presentation)

**Chiara Adamo,** Acting Director INTPA G provided an update on GAP III implementation at country level based on the CLIPs[1], which are one of the main novelties introduced by the GAP III to ensure political priorities are translated into reality on the ground, in co-creation with MS and partner countries, but also with CS, grassroots and women's organisations. 130 EUDs have now gone through the CLIP process which helps to take a strategic approach and focus efforts towards gender equality in each country, informed by gender analysis covering a wide range of issues.

The EU has committed to 85 % of external actions delivering on gender equality, as measured by the OECD gender equality policy marker. In 2021, 70 % of new actions had gender equality as a significant (G1) or principal (G2) objective. Gender mainstreaming and the human rights-based approach is also integrated into investment operations. The EU is working with development finance institution partners to strengthen gender-lens investment operations. Ms Adamo presented several examples of TEIs targeting and mainstreaming gender equality.

Political dialogues and multilateral efforts take place regularly. Progress is also being made on developing more meaningful and inclusive dialogue with WROs and CSOs, but there is scope to go further in some countries and the EU welcomes participants' input including best practice examples. This year, EUDs have started to track quality as well as quantity of these consultations. 2021 saw an increase in EU and MS funding to WROs, feminist organisations and movements. The study "Working better together" is being distributed and can be found on Capacity4dev. Resources and tools are being developed for gender-transformative approaches and to address intersectionality. To lead by example the EU is training staff, putting in place gender focal persons and progressing towards gender balance in management. In terms of next steps, the GAP III draft mid-term evaluation is foreseen for March and the mid-term progress report for autumn 2023.

**Maureen Olyaro,** Deputy Director at the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), gave feedback on what is working from a CS and ALA perspective : i) mainstreaming of gender equality through the Multiannual Indicative Programmes (MIPs) at national, regional and global levels and the funding that has been allocated through the TEIs; and ii) prioritisation of gender equality by many EUDs. In terms of what could be improved, she gave the following recommendations: i) EU to commit to funding targets such that 85 % of official development assistance (ODA) should go to G1 and G2 programmes and 20 % should go to G2 programmes. ii) There is a need for flexible, long-term funding for organisations at community level working on gender inequality and discrimination on a daily basis. iii) The EU-AU summit held in February 2022 did not directly include funding for gender equality in the Global Gateway initiative and its investment package. iv) Ensure that all the final CLIPs are made public in a centralised place. v) Expand access and support to CSOs, WROs and feminist organisations, including those led by girls and young women, to address shrinking democratic space and opposition. CSOs are partners not beneficiaries, their engagement must be meaningful and continuous. vi) The mid-term review should look at the extent to which the GAP III principles of gender-transformative approach, intersectionality of gender with other forms of discrimination, and human rights-based approach are being implemented. vii) Ensure the mid-term review is an honest stocktaking of whether GAP III implementation is on track, again consulting CSOs working on gender equality and women's rights at country-level by EUDs.

**Pilar Diaz,** Mayor of Esplugues de Llobregat, Spain, presented the Equal Med initiative. This decentralised cooperation project is led by IMADEL (Moroccan Institute for Local Development), supported by DIBA (Barcelona Provincial Council) and began five years ago. The objective is to promote gender equality in local policies in Morocco, through two main axes: women's political participation; and gender mainstreaming training for staff in municipalities. Local authorities from both countries have worked together on exchanges and pilot projects, creating a community for collaboration. **Nadia Chadi,** Vice President of the commune of Tetouan, Morocco,

---

[1] CLIPS are available on the Capacity4dev website: https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/country-level-implementation-plans-clips---gender/discussions/country-level-implementation-plans-clips-and-gender-country-profiles-gcps

explained that while there has been substantial progress in the participation of women in the public sphere in Morocco, women still face challenges due to some patriarchal mentalities. Equal Med is empowering women through consultations, committees, training sessions and community outreach. Work has focused on economic empowerment as the foundation for empowerment in all areas of a woman's life; and fighting violence in all its forms, including for marginalised women in rural areas.

Participants used Slido to indicate their awareness of how GAP III is currently being implemented in their country; and areas of engagement [see Annex 2].

## V. Making the invisible visible through an intersectional approach

The session looked at how the GAP principle of intersectionality could be better integrated into EU development cooperation. Two local initiatives were presented:

**Caroline Wambui**, VSO International ([powerpoint presentation](#)) presented the **Make Way Programme**. Intersectionality is a framework that helps understand how different aspects of a person's identity combine to create unique experiences of discrimination or privilege. The Intersectionality Consortium has developed an intersectional approach, building capacity among a wider range of CSOs to lobby for available, accessible and quality SRHR services for vulnerable young people in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia. Ms Wambui explained eight enablers of intersectionality and the five phases of the intersectional community scorecard. The scorecard places the citizen at the centre and brings an intersectional lens to social accountability tools. In terms of lessons that the EU can incorporate, Ms Wambui spoke about the importance of examining existing values and practices. Make Way is able to share and conduct trainings on the scorecard and is developing a guide on how to intersectionalise tools.

**Irena Cvetkovic** spoke about the work of **Coalition Margins**, a CSO advocating for SRHRs of women, girls and LGBTIQ+ people from an intersectional perspective in North Macedonia. The driving principle is "leave no one behind", advocating for mainstreaming of sexual orientation and gender identity. Coalition Margins works for an intersectional perspective in reporting on GBV; on concrete initiatives to change social attitudes; supports local CSOs that provide legal aid; and holds EU strategies and programmes to account. Recommendations to the EU: i) Increase funding and include specific funding for organisations led by marginalised groups. ii) Include intersectional organisations in policy development and implementation; and iii) work with EUDs to ensure LGBTIQ+ and other intersectional organisations are always involved in consultations and dialogues.

In **breakout groups**, participants discussed lessons learned regarding intersectionality in their work, and how donors could be more effective in supporting intersectional approaches. [See Annex 1 for full output from these discussions].

**Main takeaways and recommendations:**

*Best practices (that also apply to donors):*

- Respect the value of the individual and apply the indivisibility of all human rights, without hierarchy. Women's security is the prerequisite, the promotion of education and freedom to exercise rights is part of ensuring this.
- An intersectional approach should be applied in gender mainstreaming across all policy areas (including economic justice and climate change); in all aspects; at all levels, with a life course perspective.
- Start with awareness, checking biases. Consult with people who live the experience to understand and provide support. Define intersectionality and ensure a common understanding within an organisation. Have specific guidelines to aid in understanding what intersectionality means.
- Lead by example and translate political commitments into practice. Appoint a specific person/specialist with responsibility to coordinate gender and intersectionality efforts.
- Programme/project, risk assessment and evaluation criteria should include intersectionality. Guidelines and methodology to ensure a common understanding (including for EUDs).

- Create space within projects and "at the table" to invite concerned people to speak for themselves. Always show inclusion and active listening of all different social groups and identities.
- Ensure inclusive, accessible and transparent consultations at all stages, with targeted outreach to those most often left behind, to understand their lived experience.
- Accept that there is no "one size fits all." Look at context and local analysis. Support locally-led programmes and engagement (with language support) for a contextualised approach.
- Gather evidence, using disaggregated data with "do no harm" approach.
- Use intersectional criteria to pick projects.
- Look at child development, from childhood to women's development.
- Employ peer exchanges for local elected women.
- Communicate and campaign for social change.
- Provide capacity-building and training for local actors and stakeholders, including peer-to-peer collaboration, and for EU staff. Train specialized personnel for the care of all women with an intersectional approach and multisectoral and multilevel exchanges of experiences.
- Target underrepresented people, recognise intersecting identities. This is especially noted for women with disabilities, who are often invisible within other target groups. Need to make them visible (document, produce evidence, include in advocacy).
- Organisational models include: charters/political frameworks; women-led cooperatives.
- Analyse how economic polices affect women; remember the employment aspect of gender equality (entrepreneurship, women in business and leadership).
- Protect LGBTQI+ defenders as one of the most vulnerable groups. Work with LGBTQI+ and youth to better understand needs.
- Apply an intersectional lens with climate change research and activities.

*Financial support from donors:*

- Funding to be more accessible, sustainable (core/long-term), and flexible to address community realities. Intersectional approach that encourages cooperation between local organisations, and the participation of movements that do not fit traditional models. Look at innovative ways to support organisations working on intersections: e.g. sub-granting & access to funding for local grassroots organisations
- Design projects with local CSOs and provide spaces to discuss context and needs. This includes asking human rights defenders what they need.
- Gender-responsive budgeting and targets across all policy areas, with a life-course approach. These requires intersectional data on gender based violence.
- Fund and advocate for better research, data and indicators.
- Support for defenders must be funded and meet their intersectional needs.
- Support to CSOs, especially WROs and LGBTIQ+ organisations.
- Provide budget lines in funding for childcare, mental health and burnout prevention for activists.
- Fund non-traditional gender equality topics (e.g. climate).
- Provide specific financial support for older women's leadership and specific data collection.

*Political support from donors:*

- Include intersectionality within gender mainstreaming. Develop common guidelines for EUDs on the adoption of an intersectional approach specifically related to GAPIII implementation.
- EU to promote intersectional approach in political dialogues at national and local levels and ensure an intersectional lens in all the debates (environment, climate change, migration, etc.). This includes involving intersectional CSOs.
- Recognise HR defenders publicly, as visibility helps to protect them.
- EU Delegations should receive specific training on intersectionality, have common and clear indicators to analyse progress in country, and work with local governments and create safe CSO environment.
- Raise visibility of older women and life course perspective as part of global gender equality.

- Create spaces for women leadership.
- Participate in discussions on gender-based SDG indicators and address data gaps.
- Ensure transparency in consultations and feedback.
- Increase participation of persons with intersectionality background in decision making for funding (including persons with disabilities).
- Model behavior – check your own biases, maintain common understanding, role model to change mindsets.

**Shitaye Astawes**, Director Advocacy and Communications, Africa Disability Forum (ADF) summed up with reflections including some of the points above. She mentioned that stakeholders are starting to put political commitments into practice and cited the ADF Young Women with Disabilities Leadership Programme as an example.

**Virginia Manzitti**, Team Leader Gender equality and non-discrimination, INTPA G1, emphasised that intersectionality is at the core of GAP III, as well as EU strategies on LGBTIQ Equality and Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is a result of CS engagement and Ms Manzitti agreed that engagement with marginalised groups at all levels, including country level, is very important during this mid-term stocktaking and beyond. Many EUDs are working to apply the intersectional approach in political dialogues and operational programmes. INTPA engages with EUDs in continuous dialogue and undertakes quality reviews of draft programmes to look at how intersectionality is integrated in gender mainstreaming in all sectors and particularly in programmes dedicated to gender equality. Intersectionality is a very political issue and there are also challenges around data gathering, including funding. Ms Manzitti invited CS to share practices, ideas and tools, and suggested another meeting to explore this in more depth.

## VI.     Gender equality in the digital transformation

The final session opened with a video of a project developing digital tools for women implemented by the Commonwealth Local Government Forum in Pakistan.

The keynote speech was given by **Nandini Chami**, Deputy Director, IT for Change, India; A+ Alliance, who is a co-leader of the Action Coalition on Innovation and Technology of the Generation Equality Forum. As the Beijing+25 review recognised, the gender divide cannot be bridged without closing the gender digital divide, which is about the exclusion of women and girls from access to internet connectivity as well as their adverse integration into the new institutional order of the emerging digital economy and society. There are three specific challenges: i) Women tend to be concentrated in lower skilled and precarious jobs or in small businesses that do not have the capacity to succeed in dominant online marketplaces. ii) Algorithms and a bias towards negativity (to capture attention) exacerbate sexism, misogyny and GBV; and iii) Data: privacy intrusions as well as underrepresentation of women who are not online in data that informs policymaking.

In response, three areas of global action are needed to promote gender equality and full participation in digital economies:

i) Invest in feminist digital infrastructures, not only to ensure women have the necessary skills, but also to create public data, cloud and artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure for women's enterprises, collectives and cooperatives; and "design for accountability" in the essential AI infrastructure underpinning public service delivery.

ii) A global governance framework and international legally binding treaty to make big tech accountable for women's human rights and adopt standards that dismantle harmful algorithms.

iii) Global data constitutionalism and a new multilateralism for development in the digital age that includes South-South cooperation, tax justice, equitable and fair trade, universal labour guarantees, and public investments in care infrastructure.

Recommendations to the EU: i) Adapt EU digital trade policy to protect the rights of people to govern their data resources through alternative platform, data and AI infrastructures that are democratically controlled and embedded in local economies and backed by public institutional support mechanisms for livelihoods strengthening and access to institutional credit.

ii) Oblige EU companies to safeguard data rights in their extraterritorial operations, through the ongoing revision of OECD Guidelines on Responsible Business Conduct of Multinational Enterprises and EU due diligence legislation.

iii) Shift the emphasis in GAP III from gender-inclusive digital innovation to strengthening public digital innovation ecosystems for gender equality, worldwide.

In the panel discussion, **Katri Viinikka**, Finnish Ambassador for Gender, Co-chair of the UN Generation Equality Action Coalition on Innovation and Technology and Member of the D4D (Digital for Development) hub, emphasised the importance of multistakeholder cooperation and measurable goals within these processes. She highlighted the need for an inclusive, human rights-based, transformative and intersectional approach, including through Team Europe and D4D cooperation. GAP III and the EU Digital Strategy recognise that digital technologies can also provide opportunities for women, girls and people in marginalised situations to access information and services, provided they are designed and used in a responsible way, with gender equality considerations embedded. Finland is investing in development programmes that support digital safety, human rights defenders, and digital literacy. Preventing and eliminating online GBV is a joint priority for Finland with the European Commission. It is crucial to address gender equality as a structural issue to be truly transformative; CS and grassroots organisations have a central role to play in this.


**Esther Mwema**, Digital Grassroots and co-leader of the Generation Equality Action Coalition on Innovation and Technology, spoke about the need to bridge the gap between high-level discussions, such as the Global Digital Compact and UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, and the experiences of young people and grassroots organisations. To promote digital equality and rights it is important to create space for equitable, open and flexible collaboration that avoids tokenism and leads to tangible results. The Digital Grassroots digital rights learning exchange programme is one example of how this can be done.


**Anuya Kuwar**, Programme Manager Asia Region, Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) explained digital tools that were developed with a bottom-up approach to enhance the capacities and engagement of women in local government processes in South Asia. The tools comprise 32 training lessons to address cultural, social, political and economic challenges faced by women in the South Asian region. They cover four focal areas that are key to good governance: self, family, constituency and institution; and address six key issues (ABCDEF): attending power centres, budget phobia, character assassination, division of terms, election mechanisms, and functionaries. The tools can be used as a full package or tailored, not only in South Asia but also in other regions, in different languages.


**Graziella Rizza**, Head of Sector for migration, civil society and gender equality, EU Delegation Cairo, spoke about two interlinked areas of GAP III engagement: digital transformation and climate change. EU approaches are in partnership with civil society, financial institutions, international organisations and MS. They include: promoting gender mainstreamed regulatory frameworks, policies, and actions; supporting gender specific actions using the latest technologies and digital-based governance structures; and using public diplomacy and strategic communication. Ms Rizza mentioned a recent report from the European Institute for Gender Equality [2] that highlights challenges and opportunities. There is a need to support governments and stakeholders on digital literacy and skills; accountability; access to digital services; collecting and analysing data; raising awareness and advocacy campaigns. The CLIP for Egypt is aligned with Egypt's National Strategy for Women and the 2030

---

[2] https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-equality-and-youth-opportunities-and-risks-digitalisation

Sustainable Development Vision launched at COP 27. An initiative which the EU could look at supporting as a G1 regional action is on African Women's Digital and Climate Adaptive Priorities (#winwinforall), which the UN and Egypt presented at COP 27.

**A Q&A session followed:**

*What is the EU doing / what can the EU do regarding security of women, LGBTIQ+ and human rights defenders?*

**Brigitte Lugin**, INTPA G1: A number of important EU policy documents provide for a human-centred approach in digital security. In terms of operations, the Protect Defenders mechanism also focuses on online and digital security. Happy to provide further examples and share information via platforms following this meeting. **Katri Viinikka**: There is important EU regulatory work ongoing, and existing global frameworks such as the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention. General awareness raising is important, and a multistakeholder approach. Finland's informal advisory group is a best practice example, bringing together CS representatives, young people, technology companies, academics and trade unions. **Nandini Chami**: The EU should push for common normative benchmarking to hold social media companies to account, ensuring they face penalties for violations of women's privacy and dignity. What the EU is doing through its EU Digital Services Act should be extended to the international level, for example through the OECD's Responsible Business Conduct standards. **Esther Mwema:** It is important to be intentional about who is listened to in policy development, tapping into networks of young people who can contribute to for example the UN Global Digital Compact.

*How to support mentoring?*

**Anuya Kuwar**: Agree that mentoring is key, also for women to stay in politics. Experience from South Asia shows that women with more experience in politics can mentor others. The digital tools we developed also help with networking. **Esther Mwema**: Digital Grassroots offers four weeks of training followed by four weeks of mentoring by industry experts to young people.

*What more can the EU do to tackle gender-based online harassment?*

**Katri Viinikka**: There is a proposal for an EU Directive on violence against women, including online GBV. It is important to keep raising this issue with law enforcement. The responsibility of big technology companies cannot be stressed enough, which is why it is so important to include them in discussions. **Nandini Chami**: We can only challenge the culture of cyber violence if we dismantle the algorithmic hate that drives social media models. Existing regulation, including the EU Digital Services Act, could be stronger in this regard. We should also recognise gender-based hate as a free speech violation. **Anuya Kuwar**: Struggle sharing workshops where women can talk about common challenges help to break a culture of silence.

*Can EUDs support policy, advocacy and campaigns to address online disinformation?*

**Graziella Rizza**: In some countries the EU has to be cautious when speaking about feminist movements, and address topics using the "do no harm" principle. The EU and UN Women are running in-country programmes, for example on women's digital and financial inclusion.

Further comments and questions raised via Slido:

- *The importance of a peer-to-peer approach towards increasing political participation and women's activism, as well as protecting women against violence. Direct work with women activists within both CSOs and political parties is crucial.*
- *Is there a gender action program in Belgium funded by the EU?*

- *EU can fund Gender Analyses through GAP III that can support gender-transformative digital policies and programmes. The Kosovo Women's Network has developed an innovative methodology for gender analysis in digitalisation; happy to share.*
- *Harmonisation of the legal framework and public policies integrating gender equality, and strategies for awareness-raising and training for a culture of gender equality. Does the EU integrate these aspects in a transversal way in its negotiations with countries?*

## VII. Closing remarks

**Martin Seychell**, Deputy Director General, INTPA thanked participants and stressed the importance of GAP III structured dialogue to the EU and MS as part of the Team Europe approach. The EU stands with women and men upholding their human rights in all countries. 130 CLIPs are now in place, based on broad multi-stakeholder consultations. Progress is being made on targets and stronger partnerships, and there are more gender-responsive actions across all areas including private-sector development and green and digital transition. An inclusive, whole-of-society approach is crucial.  The EU is launching a number of new support programmes for CS at global level alongside country-level support, and efforts to address intersecting forms of discrimination will be encouraged across all these programmes. Exchanges will continue in the coming months, including via EUDs, to gather feedback for the mid-term progress report on GAP III implementation and feed into future actions.

# Annex I. Whiteboards from group discussions on intersectionality

**Question 1:** How does intersectionality currently apply in the work you do and what would be your lessons learnt?

**Question 2:** How can donors be more effective in supporting intersectional approaches in your work (both from financial and political support point of view)?

## Group 1



GAP III Annual meeting: Intersectionality breakout session
Group 1 (moderator Rebecca Venuto; note taker Alessandra Croppi)

- How does intersectionality currently apply in the work you do and what would be your lessons learnt regarding the inclusion of intersectionality in your work?
- How can donors be more effective in supporting intersectional approaches in your work (both from a financial and political support point of view)?

**Best practices and lessons learnt**

- Accept that there is no "one size fits all"
- Gender equality as employment aspect (entrepreneurship, women in business and leadership)
- Needs to make space and understanding and being aware that intersectionality is an issue
- Improve ways of working
- Have a specialist that reviews and coordinates gender and intersectionality efforts at the organisation
- Context and local analysis
- Consulta with stakeholders who lived the experience
- The difficult task is to determine how to provide support and develop tools for a specific situation
- Intersectionality is an important and complex topic, and there is no abstract way to deal with it. Consultation with people who live it is the way to understand first and then provide support.
- Definition of intersectionality and have an equal understanding within the organisation
- Setting the basis to leave no one behind
- Create spaces in your own projects
- Create space at the tables and invite concerned people to speak for themselves
- Gender identity and inclusivity is a cross cutting issue
- Analyse how economic policies affect women
- Representation: always show inclusion and active listening all different social groups and identities
- Provide training on capacity building and support for the call for proposals
- Support with language expected to use, engage different CSOs and evaluate their gaps
- Recruit a movement building specialist: identify challenges and address them (LGBT, HIV women)
- Objectives to address intersectionality: leadership, economic justice and capacity building

- Invest in disaggregated data
- Have specific guidelines to understand what intersectionality means
- Engage local actors

**Donor support: financial**

- Make sure that local organisations have the capacity to engage
- Don't create competition among local organisations, instead create cooperation
- Have in one lot several organisations that can win on that call for proposals. This allows solidarity and cooperation
- Provide direct access to funds and long-term funding
- Provide safe space to discuss and convene with organisations to analyse local context and understand what is needed
- Projects should be designed with local CSOs

**Donor support: political**

- Include Intersectionality within gender mainstreaming
- Be specific about project implementation
- Have common and clear indicators to analyse progress in countries made by EUDs
- EUDs to work with local governments to advocate for feminist intersectionality and create a safe environment for CSOs to work in
- Provide specific training to EUDs on intersectionality, also to promote a common understanding

## Group 2
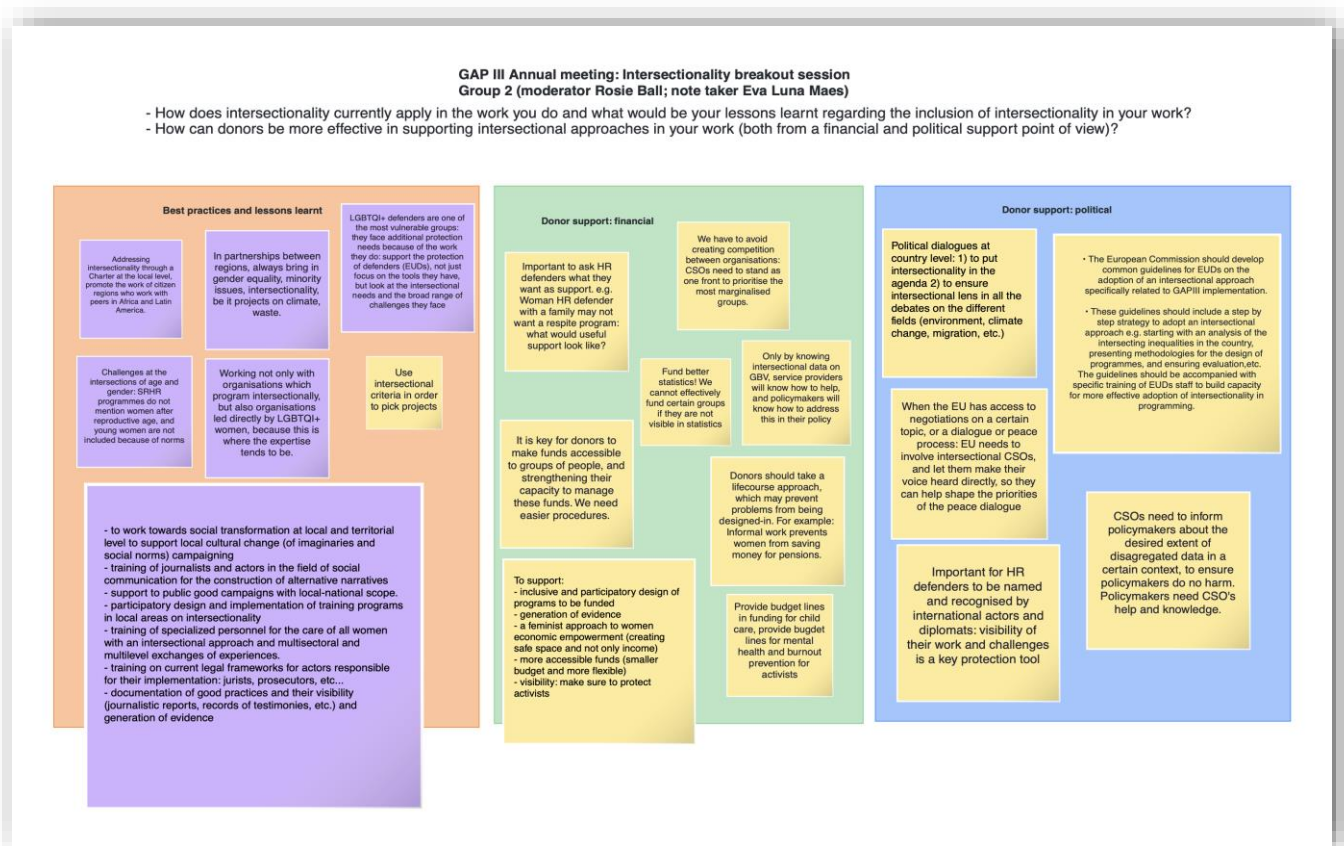
**Best practices and lessons learnt**

- LGBTQI+ defenders are one of the most vulnerable groups: they face additional protection needs because of the work they do: support the protection of defenders (EUDs), not just focus on the tools they have, but look at the intersectional needs and the broad range of challenges they face
- In partnership between regions, always bring in gender equality, minority issues, intersectionality, be it projects on climate, waste...
- Addressing intersectionality through a charter at the local level, promote the work of citizen regions who work with peers in Africa and Latin America
- Use intersectional criteria to pick projects
- Challenges at the intersections of age and gender: SRHH programmes do not mention women after reproductive age, and young women are not included because of norms
- Working not only with organisations which program intersectionally, but also organisations lead directly by LGBTQI+ women, because this is where the expertise tends to be
- To work towards social transformation at local and territorial level to support local cultural change (of imaginaries and social norms) campaigning
- Training of journalists and actors in the field of social communication for the construction of alternative narratives
- Support to public good campaigns with local-national scope. Participatory design and implementation of training programs in local areas on intersectionality
- Training of specialized personnel for the care of all women with an intersectional approach and multisectoral and multilevel exchanges of experiences.
- Training on current legal frameworks for actors responsible for their implementation: jurists, prosecutors, etc...
- Documentation of good practices and their visibility (journalistic reports, records of testimonies, etc.) and generation of evidence
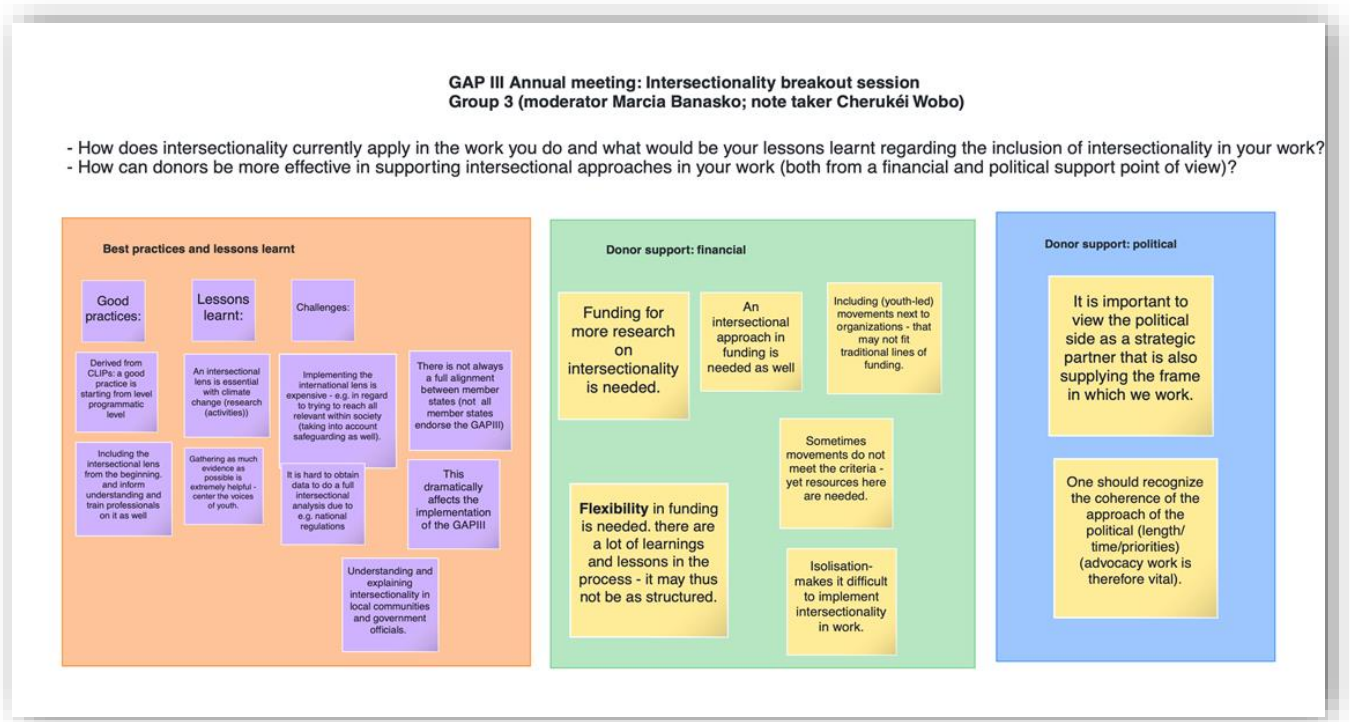
**Donor support: financial**

- Important to ask HR defenders what they want as support. e.g. Woman HR defender with a family may not want a respite program: what would useful support look like?
- Fund better statistics! We cannot effectively fund certain groups if they are not visible in statistics
- Avoid creating competition between organisations: CSOs need to stand as one front to prioritise the most marginalised groups
- Provide budget lines in funding for childcare, mental health and burnout prevention for activists
- Only by knowing intersectional data on GBV, service providers will know how to help, and policymakers will know how to address this in their policy
- It is key for donors to make funds accessible to groups of people, and strengthening their capacity to manage these funds. We need easier procedures.
- Donors should take a life course approach, which may prevent problems from being designed-in. For example: Informal work prevents women from saving money for pensions.
- To support: inclusive and participatory design of programs to be funded; generation of evidence; a feminist approach to women economic empowerment (creating safe space and not only income); more accessible funds (smaller budget and more flexible); visibility: make sure to protect activists

**Donor support: political**

- Political dialogues at country level: 1) to put intersectionality in the agenda 2) to ensure intersectional lens in all the debates on the different fields (environment, climate change, migration, etc.)
- When the EU has access to negotiations on a certain topic, or a dialogue or peace process: EU needs to involve intersectional CSOs, and let them make their voice heard directly, so they can help shape the priorities of the peace dialogue

- The European Commission should develop common guidelines for EUDs on the adoption of an intersectional approach specifically related to GAPIII implementation.
- These guidelines should include a step-by-step strategy to adopt an intersectional approach e.g. starting with an analysis of the intersecting inequalities in the country, presenting methodologies for the design of programmes, and ensuring evaluation, etc. The guidelines should be accompanied with specific training of EUDs staff to build capacity for more effective adoption of intersectionality in programming.

## Group 3



**GAP III Annual meeting: Intersectionality breakout session**
**Group 3 (moderator Marcia Banasko; note taker Cherukéi Wobo)**

- How does intersectionality currently apply in the work you do and what would be your lessons learnt regarding the inclusion of intersectionality in your work?
- How can donors be more effective in supporting intersectional approaches in your work (both from a financial and political support point of view)?

### Best practices and lessons learnt

- Good practices: Derived from CLIPs, a good practice is starting from programmatic level
- Good practices: Including the intersectional lens from the beginning, and inform understanding and train professionals on it
- Lessons learnt: An intersectional lens with climate change (research, activities)
- Lessons learnt: Gathering as much evidence as possible is extremely helpful – center the voices of youth
- Challenges: Implementing the international lens is expensive - e.g. in regard to trying to reach all relevant within society (taking into account safeguarding as well)
- Challenges: It is hard to obtain data to do a full intersectional analysis due to e.g. national regulations
- Challenges: Understanding and explaining intersectionality in local communities and government officials
- Challenges: There is not always a full alignment between member states (not all member states endorse GAP III). This dramatically affects the implementation of GAP III

### Donor support: financial

- Funding for more research on intersectionality is needed
- Including (youth-led) movements next to organisations – that may not fit traditional lines of funding
- Sometimes movements do not meet the criteria – yet resources are needed
- An intersectional approach in funding is needed
- Isolation – makes it difficult to implement intersectionality work
- Flexibility is funding is needed. There are a lot of learnings and lessons in the process – not structured

**Donor support: political**

- It is important to view the political side as a strategic partner that is also supplying the frame in which we work
- One should recognize the coherence of the political (length/time/priorities), advocacy work is therefore vital
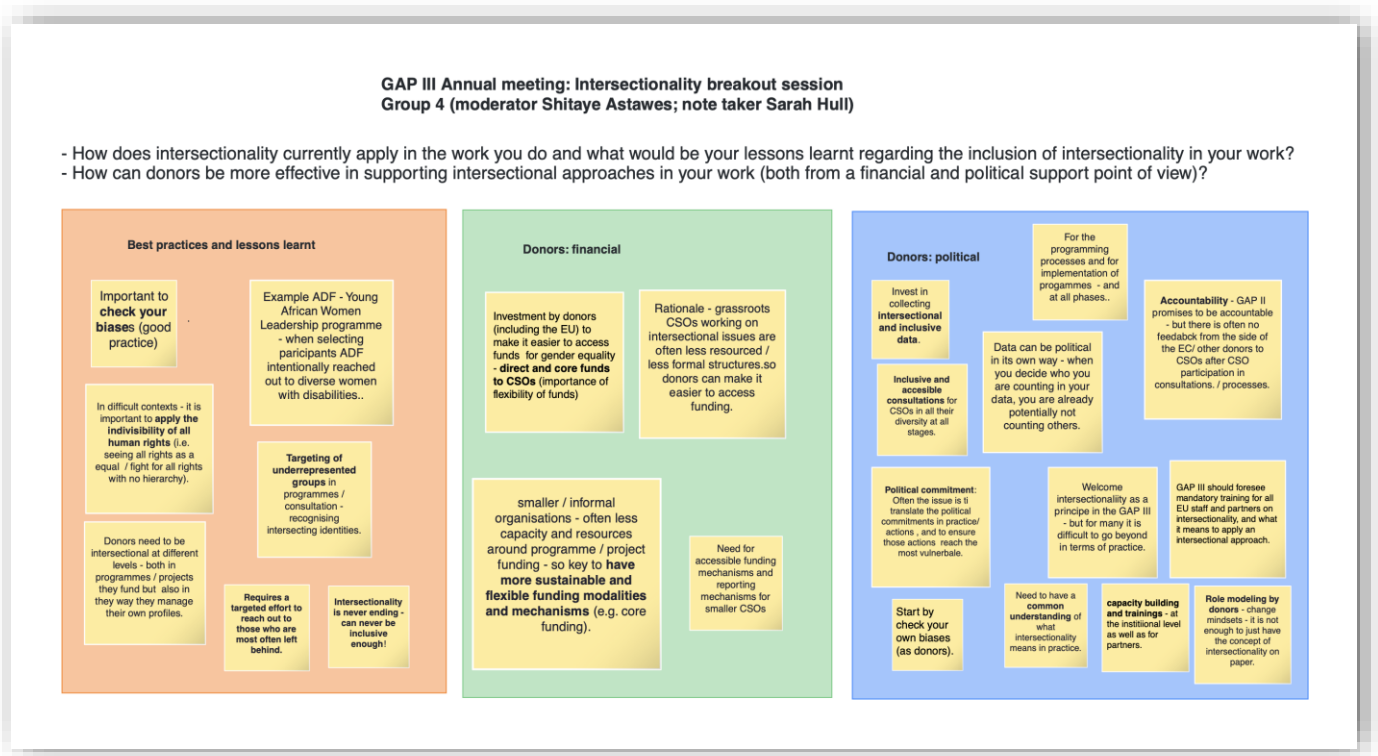
**Best practices and lessons learnt**

- Important to check your biases (good practice)
- Intersectionality is never ending – can never be inclusive enough
- In difficult contexts, it is important to apply the indivisibility of all human rights (i.e. seeing all rights as equal, fight for all rights with no hierarchy)
- Donors need to be intersectional at different levels, both in programmes/projects they fund but also in the way they manage their own profiles
- Example: ADF Young Africa Women Leadership Programme, when selecting participants, ADF intentionally reached out to diverse women with disabilities
- Targeting of underrepresented groups in programmes / consultation – recognising intersecting identities

**Donor support: financial**

- Investment by donors (including the EU) to make it easier to access funds for gender equality - direct and core funds to CSOs (importance of flexibility of funds)
- Smaller / informal organisations - often less capacity and resources around programme / project funding - so key to have more sustainable and flexible funding modalities and mechanisms (e.g. core funding).
- Need for accessible funding mechanisms and reporting mechanisms for smaller CSOs
- Rationale - grassroots CSOs working on intersectional issues are often less resourced / less formal structures.so donors can make it easier to access funding

**Donor support: political**

- Inclusive and accessible consultations for CSOs in all their diversity at all stages.
- Invest in collecting intersectional and inclusive data.
- Data can be political in its own way - when you decide who you are counting in your data, you are already potentially not counting others.
- Accountability - GAP III promises to be accountable - but there is often no feedback from the side of the EC/ other donors to CSOs after CSO participation in consultations / processes.
- For the programming processes and for implementation of programmes - and at all phases.
- Political commitment: Often the issue is to translate the political commitment in practice / actions, and to ensure those actions reach the most vulnerable
- Welcome intersectionality as a principle in GAP III, but for many it is difficult to go beyond in terms of practice
- GAP III should foresee mandatory training for all EU staff and partners on intersectionality, and what it means to apply an intersectional approach
- Start by checking your own biases (as donors)
- Need to have a common understanding of what intersectionality means in practice
- Capacity building and trainings, at the institutional level as well as for partners
- Role modelling by donors, change mindsets, it is not enough to just have the concept of intersectionality on paper

## Group 5
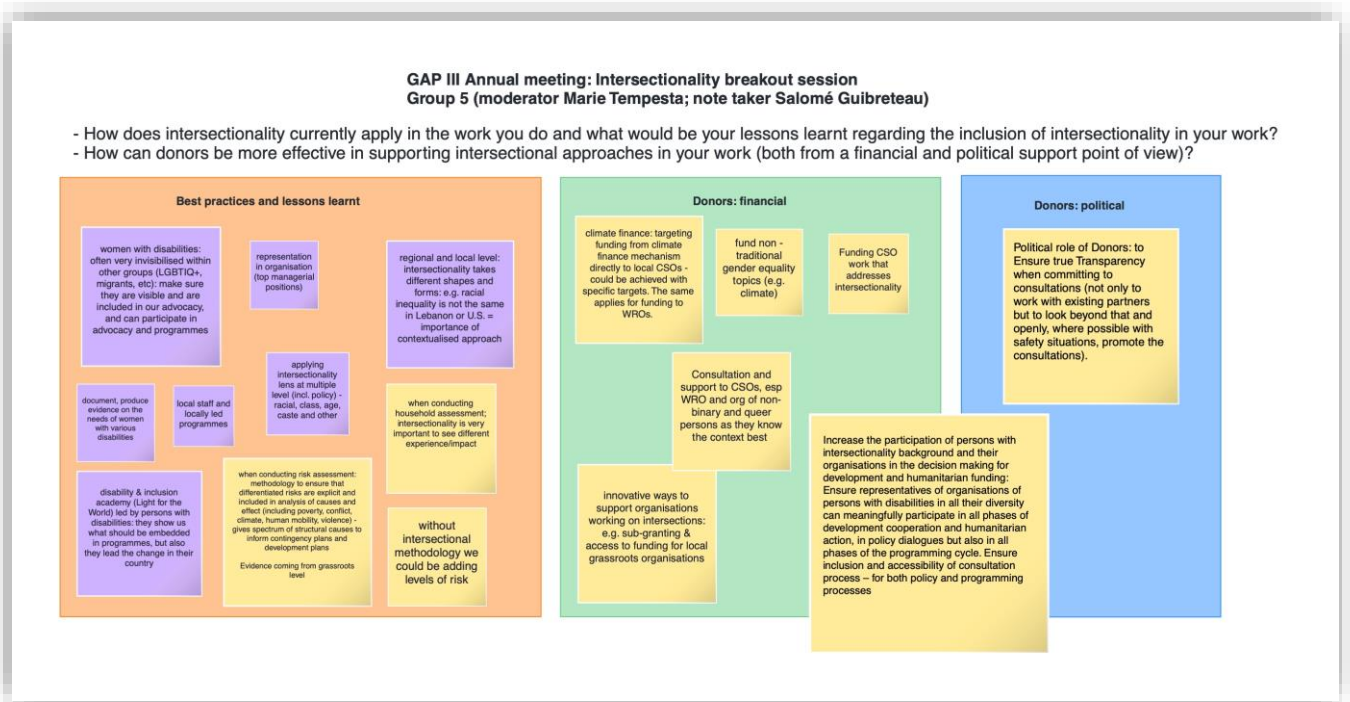


**Best practices and lessons learnt**

- women with disabilities: often very invisible within other groups (LGBTIQ+, migrants, etc): make sure they are visible and are included in our advocacy, and can participate in advocacy and programmes
- disability & inclusion academy (Light for the World) led by persons with disabilities: they show us what should be embedded in programmes, but also they lead the change in their country
- document, produce evidence on the needs of women with various disabilities
- local staff and locally led programmes
- representation in organisation (top managerial positions)

- applying intersectionality lens at multiple level (incl. policy) - racial, class, age, caste and other
- regional and local level: intersectionality takes different shapes and forms: e.g. racial inequality is not the same in Lebanon or U.S. = importance of contextualised approach
- when conducting risk assessment: methodology to ensure that differentiated risks are explicit and included in analysis of causes and effect (including poverty, conflict, climate, human mobility, violence) - gives spectrum of structural causes to inform contingency plans and development plans
- Evidence coming from grassroots level
- when conducting household assessment; intersectionality is very important to see different experience/impact
- without intersectional methodology we could be adding levels of risk

## Donor support: financial

- Consultation and support to CSOs, especially WRO and organisations of non- binary and queer persons as they know the context best
- climate finance: targeting funding from climate finance mechanism directly to local CSOs - could be achieved with specific targets. The same applies for funding to WROs
- fund non-traditional gender equality topics (e.g. climate)
- innovative ways to support organisations working on intersections: e.g. sub-granting & access to funding for local grassroots organisations
- Funding CSO work that addresses intersectionality

## Donor support: political

- Increase the participation of persons with intersectionality background and their organisations in the decision making for development and humanitarian funding: Ensure representatives of organisations of persons with disabilities in all their diversity can meaningfully participate in all phases of development cooperation and humanitarian action, in policy dialogues but also in all phases of the programming cycle. Ensure inclusion and accessibility of consultation process – for both policy and programming processes
- Political role of Donors: to Ensure true Transparency when committing to consultations (not only to work with existing partners but to look beyond that and openly, where possible with safety situations, promote the consultations)

## Group 6
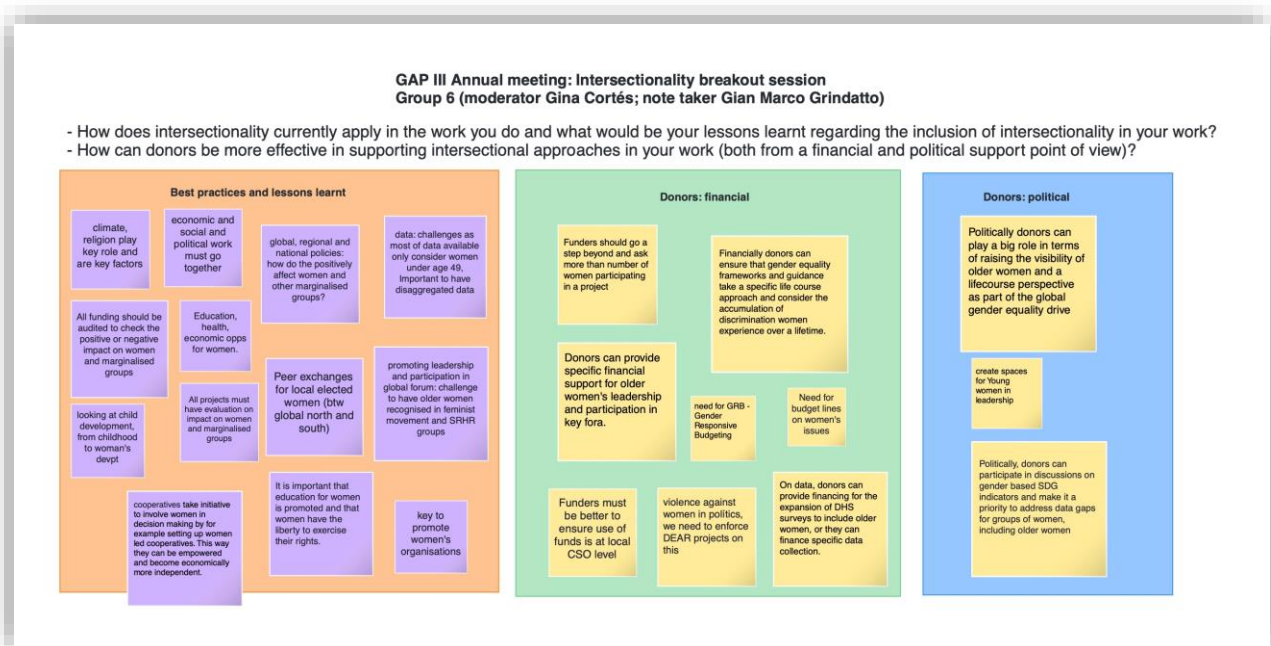
**Best practices and lessons learnt**

- Climate, religion play key role and are key factors
- Economic and social and political work must go together
- Global, regional and national policies: how do they positively affect women and other marginalized groups?
- Data: challenges as most od data available only consider women under age 49. Important to have disaggregated data
- All funding should be audited to check the positive or negative impact on women and marginalized groups
- Education, health, economic opportunities for women
- Peer exchanges for local elected women (between global north and south)
- Promoting leadership and participation in global for a: challenge to have older women recognized in feminist movements and SHRH groups
- Looking at child development, from childhood to woman's development
- All projects must have evaluation on impact on women and marginalized groups
- It is important that education for women is promoted and that women have the liberty to exercise their rights
- Key to promote women's organisations
- Cooperatives take initiative to involve women in decision making by for example setting up women led cooperatives. This way they can be empowered and become economically more independent

**Donor support: financial**

- Need budget line son women's issues
- Funders must be better to ensure use of funds is at local CSO level
- Funders should go a step beyond and ask more than number of women participating in a project
- Need for gender responsive budgeting (GRB)
- Financially donors can ensure that gender equality frameworks and guidance take a specific life course approach and consider the accumulation of discrimination women experience over a lifetime
- Donors can provide specific financial support for older women's leadership and participation in key for a
- Violence against women in politics, we need to enforce DEAR projects on this
- On data, donors can provide financing for the expansion of DHS surveys to include older women, or they can finance specific data collection

**Donor support: political**

- Politically donors can play a big role in terms of raising the visibility of older women and a life course perspective as part of the global gender equality drive
- Create spaces for young women in leadership
- Politically, donors can participate in discussions on gender-based SDG indicators and make it a priority to address data gaps for groups of women, including older women

**GAP III Annual meeting: Intersectionality breakout session**
**Group 8 (moderator Julieta Gonzalez; note taker Rocío Ballesta Orta)**

- How does intersectionality currently apply in the work you do and what would be your lessons learnt regarding the inclusion of intersectionality in your work?
- How can donors be more effective in supporting intersectional approaches in your work (both from a financial and political support point of view)?

- Comment l'intersectionnalité s'applique-t-elle aujourd'hui dans votre travail ? Et quels enseignements pouvez-vous tirer de votre travail sur l'inclusion de l'intersectionnalité ?
- Comment les donateurs peuvent-ils être plus efficaces dans leur soutien des approches intersectionnelles dans votre travail (à la fois d'un point de vue financier et politique) ?

- ¿Cómo se aplica actualmente la interseccionalidad en el trabajo que usted realiza, y cuáles serían sus aprendizajes sobre la inclusión de la interseccionalidad en su trabajo?
- ¿Cómo pueden los donantes ser más efectivos a la hora de apoyar enfoques interseccionales en su trabajo (tanto desde el punto de vista financiero como político)?

## Best practices and lessons learnt

- The use of the intersectional feminist approach helps to assess the violence suffered by women in all its diversity
- Work with youth and LGBTQ associations to better understand their needs and develop better policies
- Intersectionality: using perspective in retrospect but also in the future
- In the context of negotiations with other countries (specifically with Morocco), harmonization of laws. Create common policy frameworks to address common issues: violence against women, for example.
- The Euro-Mediterranean Charter for equality between men and women was drafted with the collaboration of local authorities. This collaboration makes the intersectional perspective more aware
- Women's safety is essential. To make gender policies, women's lives must first be secured. Education and the freedom of women to exercise their rights to be alive must be promoted. Educate in a healthy masculinity.

## Donor support: financial

- Budgets are also skewed. There must be mandates related to equity and inclusion.
- Shared workspaces should be created between several services of the axes of inequality to elaborate shared financial projects and not biased by focal policies

## Donor support: political

- Intervention at the local level should promote a change in the perception of the subject
- Intersectionality can be useful in equality policies. Focusing on the intersection of diverse identities, it shows the limits of those policies that can fragment society.

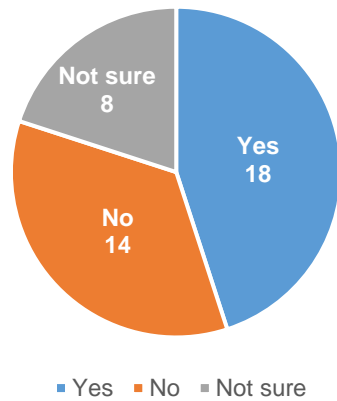**Question 1:** Where are you joining from today?
(83 respondents)



■ Europe    ■ Africa    ■ Latin America & the Caribbean    ■ Middle East
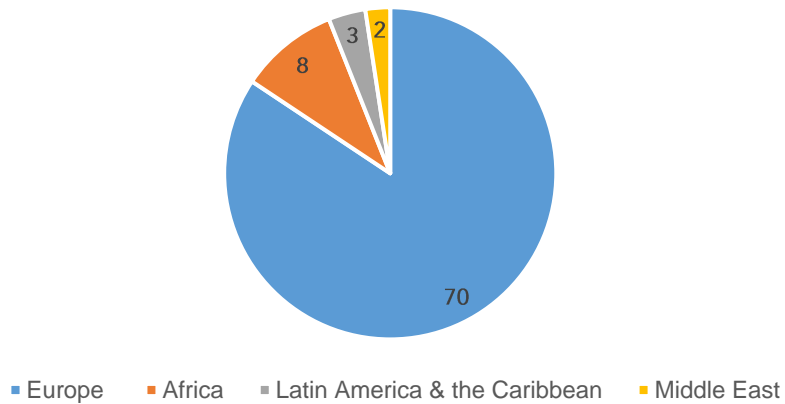
**Question 2:** Please share one word that describes your main challenge to achieving gender equality (65 respondents)

**Question 3:** Are you aware of how GAP III is being implemented in your country? (40 respondents)



Not sure
8

Yes
18

No
14

■ Yes ■ No ■ Not sure

**Question 4:** In which areas of engagement are you working? (34 respondents, multiple answers possible)



Combatting gender-based violence
22

Advancing equal participation and leadership
21

Strengthening economic and social rights & empowering women and girls
19

Other
15

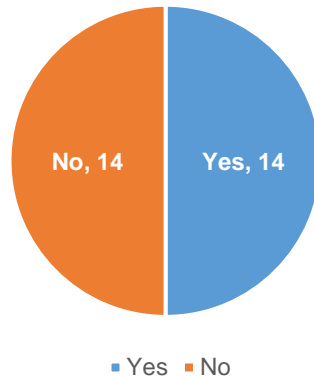Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights
12

Challenges & opportunities of green transition and digital transformation
11

Implementing the women, peace and security agenda
6

**Question 5:** Are you working on gender equality and digital transformation? (28 respondents)



No, 14    Yes, 14

■ Yes  ■ No

**Question 6:** 2 priority areas to address the challenges of achieving gender equality in the digital transformation (24 respondents, multiple answers possible)

Digital rights/connectivity/access to technology
14

Breaking stereotypes that limit full participation
10

Skills and development
9

Digital security/safety
9

Participation in digital economies
2

Other
1