



Equity in action

Gender equality and inclusion strategy



Gender equality and non-discrimination are not just legal obligations - they are fundamental rights and essential pillars of just, peaceful and prosperous societies.

However, despite significant progress in the last decades, we are now at a turning point. Against a backdrop of significant setbacks for women's rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights, the rights of minorities and vulnerable groups and shrinking civic spaces worldwide, it is essential we resist pushbacks and reinvent the manner in which we wish to protect our core mission: building a just and fairer world where everyone can thrive. In these efforts, our fundamental values will remain our compass, guiding us toward that goal.

This holds even more weight in fragile and crisis contexts where we predominantly operate. Our continuous engagement requires our constant and

careful consideration for those most affected by crises and pre-existing inequalities. The meaningful participation of people with the lived experience, including women and representative of vulnerable groups is essential in preserving and rebuilding peace, resilience and equitable, inclusive societies.

While global progress continues to face polarisation, resistance and even regression, powerful signals of change still offer hope and momentum. Belgium stands out as a recent example, where renewed commitments to human rights and dignity for all, gender equality and inclusive policymaking hold firm root across institutions.



“For me, women’s empowerment is not a project - it’s a lifelong commitment to equality and freedom. That’s why I choose to volunteer to our gender and inclusion group: because creating spaces of belonging starts with each of us.”

Reece-Hermine Adanwenon
Communication officer in Benin



“The pursuit of human and women’s rights, equity and inclusion forms part of a collective journey: one that is resilient, adaptive and mindful of the multiple contexts where our partnerships grow and evolve, and shaped by the aspirations of the communities we serve.”

Jean Van Wetter
CEO of Enabel



Unfold to open





1

- Programmes -

Empower voices and amplify local solutions

We challenge gender inequalities, barriers to empowerment and overlapping sources of discrimination.

To address the root causes of gender inequality, we focus on tackling harmful norms and removing structural barriers faced by marginalised groups: these barriers include for example social norms, political, legal and economic structures, and discriminatory power dynamics. Through our **gender transformative approach**, we promote meaningful, participative, and long-lasting change - from community-based actions to national policies support.

Global challenges and major societal transformations such as **climate change, migration, digitalisation, or the energy transition** have unequal impacts on women and marginalised groups. That's why we integrate gender equality and a human rights-based approach in our work, ensuring our responses are inclusive and effective across all contexts.

Between 2022 and 2024, 87% of our Belgium-funded programmes targeted gender equality and women's empowerment, reflecting our commitment to **mainstreaming gender** across all operations.

At the same time, our approach also includes **targeted action**. We co-create solutions to support women's entrepreneurship and leadership, to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV) including tech-facilitated GBV in a comprehensive manner - and promote gender transformative education and gender-responsive climate action. Where successful, approaches are **scaled across sectors and regions** to maximise impact.

2

- Policies, operations, processes -

Shape policies and institutionalise equality

We build strategic alliances and shape policies that institutionalise gender equality and social inclusion. We advance equity as the backbone of our operations and processes.

In a complex, increasingly polarised world, we understand that advancing gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights and inclusion can be sensitive - especially when perceived as conflicting with local norms. That is why **we foster respectful dialogue** and evidence-based engagement. This allows us to remain culturally sensitive and effectively balance global standards and local realities.

We build **partnerships** and strategic alliances with institutions, civil society organisations and communities to bring about gender equality into institutions - ensuring that inclusion becomes part of how systems operate, not just an add-on. To guarantee long lasting change, we strengthen the capacity and skills of actors to deliver inclusive public services. We support **a shift from intention to action**.

We explore public-private partnerships and fund dedicated initiatives, as well as **innovative financing mechanisms** - such as climate finance and diaspora-linked funding for gender-responsive efforts.

To accurately monitor and increase the impact of our actions, **data and evidence** are powerful tools. We produce and analyse data on gender equality and inclusion to better inform action, shift power dynamics, and strengthen accountability in our processes. This commitment extends to public procurement, providers and ICT systems, where we strive for accessibility. We aim at distributing resources and opportunities equitably.

3

- Organisation -

Foster inclusive leadership and a culture of belonging

We build a workplace culture where leadership models equity, and accountability strengthens belonging for every staff member.

We abide internally by the same guiding principles we aim for in our programmes. By creating an environment where every individual feels empowered, supported, and celebrated for their unique contributions to organisational goals and values, **we walk the talk**. Enabel staff and counterparts should feel empowered to contribute their ideas, be authentic without fear of exclusion, bias, or retaliation.

We guarantee equal opportunity and boost inclusion in our recruitments. We generalise mandatory and continuous learning on gender equality, interculturality, unconscious bias, and diversity for all staff to raise awareness and foster an inclusive environment.

We observe a **zero-tolerance policy** for sexism, racism or any form of discrimination or abuse. We ensure all employees are aware of the policies, reporting mechanisms and sanctions for their violation. We foster open dialogue through mentorship, employee resource groups, and inclusive communication - ensuring everyone's voice is heard and valued.

We promote **leadership that leads by example**, ensuring gender equality and inclusion are integrated into every aspect of the organisation - and supported by clear accountability frameworks and measurable targets.

Actionable mechanisms



Steering



Sponsorship & Accountability



Collaborative governance



Technical Hub



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