



The Italian Development Cooperation (IDC) has always placed gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) at the core of its policies and actions. Italy promoted GEWE by adopting a multidimensional and holistic approach: not only recognizing it as a fundamental condition to fulfill women's human rights, but also unleashing women's agency through transformative strategies for poverty eradication.

Women's social and economic empowerment, in fact, is key to women's ability to enjoy all other human rights, while recognizing the deep connection of the economic dimension to other sectoral dimensions.

Italy advocated for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls to be a stand-alone goal on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG5), as well as a transversal component of the Agenda, and aligns its development actions with relevant International Bodies' recommendations (i.e. UN, EU, G7 and G20).

Dedicated guidelines of the Italian Development Cooperation were adopted to translate into practice the promotion of the full participation of women in the socio-economic-development processes of partner countries. This is also reflected in the three-Year Programming and Policies Planning Document (PPPD) 2016–2018 and 2017–2019 of the IDC. The review of the IDC guidelines on gender equality and women's empowerment is on-going and it will strengthen the methodology for the gender mainstreaming and its application in all the IDC activities, in line with the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals.

The Italian Strategy is based on a twin-track approach pursued over many years, while respecting national sectoral plans and policies of partner countries:

1. The gender mainstreaming approach to be applied in all development activities;
2. The implementation of dedicated project initiatives in favour of girls and women.

This IDC action follows a multidimensional and intersectoral focus where the complexity of women's life and all discriminations, barriers and obstacles affecting their empowerment process are fully recognized and addressed. Furthermore, most IDC initiatives include the improvement of sex-disaggregated data collection systems and the implementation of gender budgeting. This ensures that women's multidimensional well-being and the contribution of their unpaid work to the macroeconomic policy are taken into account in policy-making process at both local and national levels.

Italy also works with international organizations and recently new multilateral initiatives have been undertaken with UN Women, UNFPA, CIHEAM-IAMB, IOM, UNIDO and FAO.

IDC's gender work in Senegal and Ethiopia, as well as the humanitarian initiative for Syrian women, are three relevant examples of this approach.

The bilateral **Integrated Programme of Economic and Social Development in Senegal** contributes to addressing the needs of women and vulnerable groups, in partnership with the Ministry of Gender Affairs, local institutions and civil-society organizations, while pursuing SDG 5 targets. By identifying women's economic and social potential, and their needs, as well as gender barriers and discrimination, the initiative promotes women's economic empowerment and agency through three components: 1. Promotion of access to economic resources and opportunities including jobs, financial specific services, property and other productive assets, skills development