

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a global consensus that addressing gender equality and empowering women and girls is a critical step in significantly improving development outcomes. Countries and donors have pledged to increase investments to address gender equality through their commitments to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5: Achieve gender equality and empower women and girls. Since the adoption of the SDGs, further global initiatives have emerged and resources have been mobilized, creating a diverse range of initiatives and funding flows targeting gender equality. As such, tracking gender financing helps to understand progress towards these global gender equality initiatives and the impact of targeted funding. Yet despite commendable efforts, it remains difficult for gender equality stakeholders to trace this funding. If it is unclear who is spending what, where, and to what effect to address gender inequality, we risk only seeing a portion of the picture.

With so much still to be done to eradicate extreme poverty and social inequality, and with the role of women and girls so central to this, we cannot afford to overlook, nor underestimate, the contribution of women and girls everywhere. Meeting the SDG targets will require transparent information, particularly at the country level, in order to direct (or redirect) funding, coordinate, and address the funding gaps, and to hold donors and governments accountable to their gender equality commitments.

[This report](#) is the final output of our [Gender Financing Project](#) that assesses the transparency of gender financing. [Friends of Publish What You Fund](#) and [Publish What You Fund](#) previously assessed the availability and quality of gender financial and programmatic information for [Kenya](#), [Nepal](#), and [Guatemala](#). We have since conducted additional research on the availability of [humanitarian](#), [philanthropic](#), and [Development Finance Institution \(DFI\)](#) gender financing. To build on donors and data platforms' important efforts to make information about international donors' funded gender equality initiatives more transparent, this report presents common barriers that prevent gender equality stakeholders in all three countries from accessing high quality data. Through consultation with key gender equality donors, data platforms, and gender and data experts, this report offers actionable recommendations for donors and data platforms to address these issues at the global level.

Our report suggests that donors and data platforms can improve the transparency of gender financing by enhancing three components:

- **Data capacity:** The inaccessibility of data is repeatedly identified as a real barrier to better data use and to understand decision-making around the allocation of gender financing. By ensuring gender equality stakeholders' sustained access to open, user-friendly data, and necessary data resources (funding, time, technology, and data literacy) they are more likely to collect, use, and contribute to better gender financing data and ultimately development outcomes.
- **Data engagement:** Publishing gender financing data is only a first step. Actively engaging with data users to understand their needs, to provide feedback loops, and to provide constructive avenues for inputs on priorities and programs will help build trust, improve use of data, and increase local ownership.
- **Data quality:** Although there have been advances in data quality, continued improvements in the comprehensiveness, comparability, and timeliness of gender financing data will make it more likely to be useful to—and thus used by—gender equality stakeholders.

These improvements can help all relevant gender equality stakeholders' awareness of ongoing gender equality efforts, inform program design, facilitate consultations to (re)allocate funding to effective initiatives, and ultimately to promote SDG 5 and other development outcomes.

Key recommendations for donors and data platforms to increase data capacity, foster better engagement with data users, and improve the quality of gender financing data

International donors • See [Checklist A](#) for all donor recommendations

- **Recommendation 1:** Significantly increase the amount of multi-year, core funding for national and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), women's rights organizations (WROs), and feminist movements to increase their data capacity.
- **Recommendation 2:** Engage and share decision-making power with (potential) data users, particularly national and local NGOs, WROs, and feminist movements, in the entire data cycle of a gender equality project.
- **Recommendation 3:** Mark your funding against relevant gender markers. In particular, mark development and philanthropic funding against the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Gender Equality Policy Marker, mark humanitarian funding against the Gender with Age Marker (GAM), and mark 2X Challenge investments accordingly. Publish assigned gender marker scores consistently to all relevant open data platforms (where applicable, alongside other gender marker scores).

Data platforms • See [Checklist B](#) for all data platform recommendations

- **Recommendation 1:** Offer clear guidance for data users to access, understand, visualize, and safely publish gender financing data. Work with gender equality stakeholders to understand in which formats they would like this guidance and data (e.g., multiple languages, with metadata, in CSV/Excel formats and simplified, engaging formats such as videos, infographics, or visuals).
- **Recommendation 2:** Encourage publishing organizations and your own staff to engage with local partners to share decision-making power, understand their specific gender financing data needs, reporting requirements, and capacity and resource limitations.
- **Recommendation 3:** Encourage greater consistency in the use of available gender markers by clearly linking to resources on how reporting donors can apply them to their funding and how markers compare, and by working with publishers to make underlying documentation publicly available to explain their assigned gender marker scores.

CHECKLIST A: KEY DONOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Key recommendations to donors to improve the transparency of gender financing		Checklist
Donors (e.g., bilateral, multilateral, DFIs, humanitarian, philanthropic)	1. Improve data capacity	
	Significantly increase the amount of multi-year, core funding for national and local NGOs, WROs, and feminist movements to increase their data management and analysis capacity.	
	Increase gender equality stakeholders' data literacy, including that of donors' own country office staff, by offering guidance, training and/or skills support to better understand available data platforms, data reporting standards, and how to openly publish on their gender equality work in a safe way.	
	Work together with local development partners (including partner governments) to improve the infrastructure that underlies free, open and online gender financial and programmatic data (e.g., by increasing internet access, removing the costs of governments' own datasets, and supporting efforts to make their datasets more accessible and user-friendly to gender equality stakeholders).	
	2. Improve data engagement	
	Commit to engaging and sharing decision-making power with (potential) data users, particularly national and local NGOs, WROs, and feminist movements, in the design, implementation and publication of gender financing data to: better understand the types of gender data these groups would like to use and then align publication; improve the completeness and quality of existing data sources; and better align gender equality policies and projects.	
	3. Improve data quality	
	- If you provide international funding towards gender equality, mark your funding against relevant gender equality policy markers: - development funding against the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker, even if you are not a DAC-member, do not provide ODA, or if an activity has no clear gender equality objective (these could still receive a gender marker score of 0); - humanitarian funding against the GAM marker for publication to humanitarian databases, such as the FTS and CBPF. - If you provide philanthropic funding and report to IATI, also mark your gender financing as "Private sector outflows" using the "Collaboration type" data field. - If you are a DFI that has committed to the 2X Challenge, label your 2X projects. At a minimum, DFIs should mention the 2X Challenge within their data (including OECD CRS and IATI data). DFIs that host their own platform should create a 2X Challenge filter.	
	Publish your project/program's OECD-DAC gender marker score consistently to all relevant open data platforms, particularly IATI, the OECD CRS, and your own (where applicable, alongside other or your own uniquely developed gender marker).	
	Document the justification for a project's gender marker score(s) and make this information available for open publication.	
	Organize your data in the IATI Standard and publish timely and activity-specific information on target gender group(s) (including characteristics such as age groups and disability status), gender disaggregated objectives and results (including evaluations/review documents, mentioning their publication frequency), and sub-national locations.	

CHECKLIST B: KEY DATA PLATFORM RECOMMENDATIONS

Key recommendations to data platforms to improve the transparency of gender financing		Checklist
All data platforms (e.g., OECD CRS, IATI, donors' own platforms, FTS, CBPF, CERF, SDGfunders, 360Giving)	1. Improve data capacity	
	Where not already possible, enable publishers to apply/mention one or more relevant gender markers (e.g., OECD-DAC, GAM, 2X, donors' own markers) and target locations (e.g., sub-national, national, and regional) to their funding. Enable relevant filters so that data users can easily find and explore funding by relevant gender marker scores, different location types, and projects' total and yearly disbursement and commitments.	
	To increase data literacy, offer clear guidance for data users to access, understand, visualize, and safely publish (e.g., as IATI) gender financing data. Work with gender equality stakeholders to understand in which formats they would like this guidance and data to be available (e.g., multiple languages, option to view metadata, downloadable in CSV/Excel format, and in simplified, engaging formats such as videos, infographics, or visuals).	
	Enable more precise tracking of gender financing by adapting reporting standards (e.g., the OECD CRS codes) to make national and local NGOs, WROs, and feminist movements more easily identifiable within recipient and sector data fields.	
	2. Improve data engagement	
	Encourage publishing organizations and your own staff to engage with local partners to share decision-making power, understand their specific gender financing data needs, reporting requirements, and capacity and resource limitations.	
The IATI Secretariat	3. Improve data quality	
	Urge reporting donor agencies to publish IATI information on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker alongside any of their own gender marker scores.	
	Offer or link to clear resources on how reporting agencies can apply the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker to their IATI data (e.g., through manuals or instructional videos).	
	Urge reporting donors to provide underlying documentation to explain their assigned gender marker scores. In the long-run, this could be in the form of a new "gender analysis" document type. In the meantime, publishers should be encouraged to include gender analyses in existing document types (e.g., pre-project impact appraisal documents, evaluation, or review documents).	
	For greater comparability of data, IATI should encourage publishers to clearly indicate whether they publish related data to other platforms and to include links, and ensure the IATI Standard documentation includes a definition of "Private sector outflows".	
The OECD Secretariat and/or GENDERNET	Encourage greater usage of the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy marker by updating the related Handbook to clarify that the marker can and ideally should be used by non-DAC members and against non-bilaterally allocable ODA funding.	
	Encourage greater consistency in the use of the gender marker and clearly link to resources on how reporting donors can apply the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker to their funding (e.g., through clearly marked manuals and/or instructional videos on OECD.Stats platforms and CRS reporting manuals).	
	Urge reporting donors to provide underlying documentation to explain their assigned gender marker scores and work with them to make this documentation publicly available (either as Word/PDF documents or as links, for instance hyperlinking to donors' own project databases).	
	Establish external validation processes of donors' self-reported gender marked funding, as the OECD does with other areas (e.g., climate).	
Other data platforms (e.g., donor portals, FTS, CBPF, CERF, SDGfunders, 360Giving)	Consider enabling publishers to report funding against the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker to your platform. If your platform allows for reporting against other gender markers (e.g., GAM, SDG 5, 2X) consider if adding the OECD gender marker adds value and increases comparability for data users.	
	If you allow publishers to report multiple gender marker scores, provide documentation and/or guidance to help users understand how these different gender markers and scores compare.	
	Standardize reporting standards and terminologies as much as possible across platforms, including for gender (equality), humanitarian assistance, philanthropic funding, and sectors.	