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NIRAS

OUR VISION

To have the highest number of learners Completing the primary Cycle and a good number proceeding to both Secondary and tertiary levels.

NRP



NIRAS supports SDG 5

5 GENDER EQUALITY





NIRAS – engaging with the Sustainable Development Goals

Owned by a Foundation and its employees, the NIRAS Group is an international multidisciplinary consultancy firm with Scandinavian roots and values. For more than 45 years, NIRAS International Consulting has been committed to the development of innovative and sustainable solutions for our clients and society. In the more than 300 projects we help implement in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America annually, the SDGs and their individual targets guide our activities in development cooperation.

Our values and continued focus on delivering sustainable solutions for people, the environment and society are embraced by the UN Global Compact. We consider the Compact's ten universal principles as a natural way of doing business. These principles steer our actions in respecting fundamental human and labour rights, showing responsibility towards the environment, and resisting all forms of corruption.

NIRAS' continued efforts to ensure sustainable development are in line with the SDGs and support Agenda 2030. In every sector we ask ourselves if we can introduce new services where we – together with our partners and clients – can contribute to this global development agenda.

NIRAS' continued efforts to ensure sustainable development are in line with the SDGs.





Today, we deliver technical assistance to over 100 countries annually – a project portfolio managed by 350 permanent staff. Our network of external experts approaches 25,000 development professionals worldwide, and our 51 offices in 27 countries support long-term partnerships and build local capacity in the countries where we work.

In every sector we ask ourselves if we can introduce new services where, together with clients, we can contribute to the development goals.

Through our work we aim at visibly improving livelihoods and developing resilient future societies that are inclusive, stable, well governed and climate-smart.

The green growth and circular economy initiatives we work on with our partners address climate change through adaptation, mitigation and building of resilience. At the same time, they also promote job creation and generate wealth. We integrate human rights-based approaches and structured capacity-development and skills transfer into our projects and work closely with institutions to develop expertise within agricultural sector reform, private sector development, and peace, security and governance processes.

We incorporate the UN Sustainable Development Goals in all our activities and measure their impact on society and the environment. We believe that aligning our work with the SDGs enables us to identify and deliver solutions that contribute to a more sustainable and equitable world – a fundamental objective of NIRAS employees.

NIRAS' solutions are addressing the major societal challenges of our time and are directly contributing to the UN's 17 SDGs.



NIRAS takes the lead in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment

With a longstanding tradition of working with Scandinavian donors such as Sida, DANIDA and MFA Finland, NIRAS has been at the forefront of promoting gender equality around the world. As a cross-cutting goal, SDG 5 must be promoted in every sector in which we work, be it agriculture, governance, energy or any other sector. We provide high-level technical expertise in effective gender mainstreaming and application of a right-based approach to the European Commission's Gender Support Desk and EU Delegations as well as working directly with female farmers and entrepreneurs across the world. Key areas include women's economic empowerment; gender responsive budgeting; women, peace and security; and gender and resilience.

It is of utmost importance for NIRAS to support our clients in integrating a gender perspective throughout the project cycle. We want to continue to be at the forefront of promoting gender equality and contributing to SDG 5 by introducing compulsory use of the innovative **4R approach**¹, in all our project planning. Gender analysis helps the client to better understand the needs of different groups of beneficiaries so that the project interventions can be tailored to deliver appropriate services to both women and men and, as a result, increase gender equality in societies. NIRAS recognises that **gender equality is not just a means to an end**, such as economic growth, but also a tremendously important goal in itself. By challenging stereotypical social and gender norms and promoting gender equality, both men and women are able to reach their full potential as individuals.

In NIRAS-managed agricultural projects, gender equality is always a strong component. In many low-income countries, especially in Africa, 70-80% of the agricultural production comes from small farmers, who are mostly rural women. We have successfully applied the **household approach**, a participatory method which encourages the husband and wife to share division of labour equally and make joint decisions about production and expenditures. Securing women's access to and ownership of land is key for women's empowerment as well as for increased production. NIRAS has supported various **land reforms** in different countries leading to improved livelihoods for thousands of women by ensuring women's legal rights to land.

¹ The 4R Method is used to undertake a gender analysis of a given project by looking at Realia (the context), Representation, Resources and Realisation (action to be taken).



Women's economic empowerment is thought to be one of the most important drivers for the development of a country. When more women are educated and work, economies grow. There is also evidence from many countries that women with increased incomes have different priorities and change consumer patterns in ways that benefit their community and family and particularly children in terms of health, nutrition, and education. In short, women's empowerment is essential for inclusive development. NIRAS promotes women's economic empowerment through the facilitation of savings groups, improving their access to microfinance as well as regular financial institutions, and supporting the development of female-owned micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). NIRAS also works to increase women's decision-making power and active participation in the financial sector.

We are committed to fostering a **conducive political environment** where men and women from different social backgrounds can make their voices heard. Currently less than 25% of all national parliamentarians are women, which is problematic from a democracy point of view. NIRAS works to support increased presence of women in leadership positions within political parties and political participation more broadly, including women in conflict and post-conflict countries.

Our work extends beyond rural areas and grassroots level to include **state institution-building and the provision of high-level technical advisory services** to various development partners.

NIRAS facilitates and supports more than 40 projects worldwide which have gender equality as their main objective. In this booklet, we showcase six to illustrate how our work promotes equal rights and opportunities for both women and men in line with SDG 5.

5

Gender Equality

Presenting

Six projects

Six countries

Six ways towards a more
sustainable future





Introducing gender responsive budgeting in the Ukraine

CLIENT

Sida (Sweden)

COUNTRY

Ukraine

LOCATION

Ministry of Finance,
all line ministries and all
oblasts of Ukraine

DURATION

2013-2020



Gender responsive budgeting (GRB) brings together two issues that are not commonly associated with one another: gender equality and public financial management (PFM). GRB initiatives seek to improve budget results by integrating budgeting methods that take into account the needs of different groups of women and men, girls and boys. GRB not only goes hand-in-hand with PFM reforms, but it can also strengthen the objectives thereof by improving economic governance and financial management.

According to the 2017 Global Gender Gap Index, which benchmarks countries on their progress towards gender parity, Ukraine ranked 61 out of 145 countries in the world. The Index measures national gender gaps in the areas of health, education, economy and politics. In the GRB project, NIRAS supports the ongoing PFM reform in Ukraine by incorporating a gender perspective in the budget process. This helps the Government of Ukraine allocate resources in a more fair and transparent manner that benefits both men and women. The main goal of the project is increased economic efficiency and transparency of budget expenditures.

In close collaboration with the main partner, the Ukrainian Ministry of Finance, NIRAS supports the integration of GRB at both the national and local level. In each of the ministries, a working



group has been established, the members of which are trained in how to implement GRB. Each ministry has developed their own analysis of the service they deliver to the citizens, and how this service will work towards increasing gender equality in Ukraine. The project also works with all the Administrative Districts (*oblasts*) in Ukraine. In total about 2000 civil servants have gained practical knowledge in gender analysis and are now working on implementing recommendations for improvements of programmes and budget documents. For example, work is under way to change the regulations that currently excludes women from certain educational institutions.

The project contributes directly to **SDG 5** by strengthening policies and legislation for the promotion of gender equality (**target 5.c**). It also embraces **SDG 16** by contributing to effective, accountable and transparent institutions (**target 16.6**) and; responsive and inclusive decision making (**target 16.7**). In the long term, the project will contribute to all SDGs since the National Budget cuts across all sectors. To date, the GRB tool has been used to analyse the national and local budget programs in health (**SDG 3**), education (**SDG 4**), social protection and security (**SDG 10**), and youths and sports (**cross-cutting**).





Supporting the EU in promoting gender equality in International Development Cooperation

Evidence shows that when women are given equal opportunities and access to resources and decision-making powers, societies are more prosperous and peaceful. Through the **Gender Action Plan (GAP II)**, the EU wants to assist partners in effectively using the significant transformative potential of women's empowerment. GAP II focuses on girls' and women's health, economic and social rights, and participation. Overall it aims to shift the institutional culture to deliver more effectively on EU commitments regarding gender equality in international development cooperation.

The goal of the **Gender Action Plan Gender Advisory Service Project** is to assist the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) and EU delegations to implement GAP II with assistance from the **Gender Support Desk**.

In cooperation with its partners, NIRAS manages the team which runs the Gender Support Desk. Our aim is to provide the Commission with quality control, tracking and monitoring results and progress in the implementation of GAP II. We provide high-level technical assistance, key information, lessons learned and good practices related to gender programming and gender mainstreaming into the EU's external relations and work in development cooperation. The Gender Support desk also provides support to Gender Focal Persons (GFPs) within the European Commission by facilitating networking, dissemination of information on gender equality and women's empowerment, and through online training on different matters of gender analysis and gender mainstreaming.

The impact of the Gender Support Desk primarily contributes to **SDG 5** through its work on improving institutional capacity to mainstream gender. For example, the project supported DG DEVCO in improving the General Budget Support Guidelines to strengthen women's participation in decision-making for macro-economic issues and policy analysis (**target 5.5**). Through the focus on the thematic areas in GAP II, the project contributes to ensuring girls' and women's physical and psychological integrity (**target 5.6**) promoting economic and social rights of girls and women (**target 5.a**) and strengthening girls' and women's voice and participation (**target 5.5**).

GAP II also shows EUs commitment towards **SDG 8**, particularly **target 8.5** with its focus on women's participation in the economy, which is key for sustainable development and economic growth. Finally, the project helps to address **SDG 16** as it helps to build inclusive societies and institutions where both men and women are represented in decision-making at all levels (**target 16.7**).

CLIENT

EU Commission

COUNTRY

The Gender Help Desk operates from Belgium

LOCATION

Global

DURATION

2017-2019



Responsible land management improves livelihoods and gender equality in rural communities in Ethiopia

CLIENT

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

COUNTRY

Ethiopia

LOCATION

Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia, Tigray and SNNP.

DURATION

Phase I - 2011-2017, Phase II - 2018-2021





NIRAS assists the Ethiopian government with developing gender aware methods for rural land registration through the “**Responsible and Innovative Land Administration in Ethiopia**” (**REILA**) project. Phase I of REILA resulted in efficient and gender-equal land registration, and the Ethiopian government has officially adopted its methods as the formal procedure for registering rural land throughout the entire country. Phase II has just been launched and runs until 2021.

In rural Ethiopia, land is the most important asset. It serves as the primary source of food and livelihood and carries with it cultural identity and political power. Agriculture accounts for 45% of GDP and over 80% of total employment. However, much of the land in rural Ethiopia remains undesignated and underdeveloped. Thus, continued agriculture-based growth is a challenge as the lack of land tenure security often makes these areas too risky for investment. In response to these issues, REILA has developed sustainable land registration practices that increase the security for both female and male farmers with respect to the land they hold, resulting in lower risk for investments. This has led to improved productivity and livelihoods of rural communities. As expressed by the State Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture, “REILA has changed the mindset of decision-makers in land administration and assisted in the development of a harmonized system to register all the land in Ethiopia”.

The project embraces **SDG 5** through its strong focus on gender equality and women’s empowerment, particularly **target 5.a** which focuses on women equal rights to economic resources. The registration of land represents a massive distribution of wealth. Of the 400,000 parcels registered to date, REILA has ensured that women’s legal land rights are secured by registering married women and female-headed households as owners. This has led to higher respect for women in the rural communities in Ethiopia resulting in increased participation of women in decision-making (**target 5.5**).

Increased gender equality tends to generate positive spillover effects in other areas. REILA contributes positively towards **SDGs 1, 2, 3, and 4** as international studies show that women’s ownership of land contributes to better agricultural production (**target 2.3**), reduced poverty (**target 1.2**) and a larger share of household resources going to family welfare in terms of nutritious food (**target 2.1**), health (**target 3.2**) and education (**target 4.1**).

Supporting human rights and international humanitarian law - NGOs' operation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

CLIENT

Pooled funding:
Sida (Sweden), DANIDA (Denmark),
SDC (Switzerland), and The
Netherlands Representation office.

LOCATION

Occupied Palestinian Territory,
Ramallah, West Bank and Gaza

DURATION

2013 - 2018



In the occupied Palestinian territory, civil society organisations (CSOs) are important actors for advancing peace and stability because they represent the people's voice.

The Secretariat to Support Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law was a project implemented by NIRAS to maintain the needed space for civil society to act for justice and defend human rights. The Secretariat supported CSOs in Palestine and Israel to be better equipped to hold public authorities accountable. By focusing on the relationship between citizens as the right holders and authorities as the duty-bearers, the project built on the human rights-based approach (RBA). The Secretariat used international and national laws as the path that CSOs take to promote human rights and influence the behavior of the relevant public authorities, including Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the governing bodies and authorities in Gaza.

Promotion of gender equality was an important component in the project. The Secretariat provided training in gender auditing and mainstreaming to the partner CSOs, contributing to SDG 5, particularly targets 5.1 & 5.2 which aim to eliminate all discrimination and violence against women. The women's rights organizations supported by the Secretariat have been active in promoting the implementation of the The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in various ways. For example they have contributed to the



establishment of a 'Family Protection from Violence Unit' under the Public Prosecution Office that will focus on all cases of violence within the family, including sexual harassment. The work of the partner CSOs has also addressed target 5.c on sound enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality through their involvement in drafting the Family Protection Law together with the Cabinet.

In addition, the Secretariat supported partner CSOs in strengthening women's participation in politics (target 5.5) and promoting women's active involvement in the peace process (SDG 16). A number of partner CSOs work with political parties to support women's participation in politics. Furthermore, over 90 shadow councils across the occupied Palestinian territory have been established with the aim of enhancing women's awareness of their political rights. This initiative led a number of women registering as candidates for local elections in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip.





Promoting women's participation in peace processes through the UNSCR 1325 International Training Programme

Women are often left out of the peace processes and can face significant barriers in entering peace talks. In response to this, Sida initiated an International Training Programme (ITP) on UN's Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 Women, Peace and Security (WPS). The training programme was developed and organized by NIRAS and the Swedish civil society organization (CSO) Kvinna till Kvinna (Woman to Woman).

The objective of the ITP, which ran from 2011 to 2016, was to contribute to an increased consideration of women and girls' perspectives and needs in peace processes and women's influence on and participation in the implementation of peace agreements and peace building. A total of nine programmes were implemented during the course of the ITP, comprising 240 participants representing 138 organizations and institutions from five countries: Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Georgia, Liberia, and South Sudan. The countries were identified in dialogue with Sida to represent a range of states in different stages of conflict and post conflict situations.

The ITP consisted of five phases, including training in Sweden and regional follow-ups. The participants were carefully selected from various organizations representing civil society, business, and public administration and peer-learning amongst the group was also taken into consideration. The programme put a strong emphasis on facilitating networks to push the global WPS agenda and aimed at building strong skills and high capacity to drive processes of change for more effective poverty reduction. The content of the training programme was adjusted over the years following evaluations and in line with trends and new developments within the global WPS agenda.

The programme especially contributes to ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls (target 5.1), as well as ensuring women's participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making (target 5.5). Additionally the programme contributes to SDG16 and SDG17 by building inclusive institutions at all levels (targets 16.6. and 16.7) and enhancing effective capacity-building in developing countries (target 17.9).

CLIENT

Sida

COUNTRY

Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Georgia, South Sudan

DURATION

2011 -2017



5 GENDER EQUALITY



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Support to the Kosovo Agency for Gender Equality

CLIENT

Sida (Sweden)

COUNTRY

Kosovo

LOCATION

Country-wide

DURATION

2015-2019





The Kosovo Government has been prioritising gender equality for over a decade. In 2015, the Kosovo Assembly amended and approved the new Law on Gender Equality that requires gender mainstreaming of all national and local public policies. It also includes the application of gender responsive budgeting in budget planning at all levels of central government. Kosovo’s Agency for Gender Equality (AGE) works to monitor the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality and other gender equality legislation in Kosovo.

In 2015, as a response to AGE’s ongoing efforts to further strengthen its technical role in government, Sida sponsored a project “Support Institutional Strengthening for AGE”. The project was established to strengthen the capacities of gender focal points in the central executive level and local institutions, enabling them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities for the advancement of the Kosovo gender equality agenda. AGE is both the main partner and beneficiary of the project, which is managed by a consortium consisting of NIRAS and DA-DA6.

The project provides a platform for developing and strengthening partnership and networking in Kosovo to allow AGE and interested stakeholders to share expertise, resources and information on policies. At the same time, it supports AGE’s capacity to mainstream gender equality into all the policy areas. Capacity building and providing training to Kosovo’s public institutions are part of the project, ensuring that policies and legislation for the promotion of gender equality are understood and enforceable (target 5.c). It also raises awareness of women’s rights and equality within Kosovo’s society (target 5.a).

Moreover, the outcomes of the project consist of prioritizing and integrating gender equality objectives into policy and legal frameworks (target 5.c); strengthening partnerships and networking platforms to contribute to institutional strengthening of gender mechanisms, supporting informed policies and effective coordination of resources (target 5.a and 5.b); and assisting all stakeholders in ensuring that gender equality values are publicly promoted and gender stereotypes addressed (target 5.1). Through its institutional focus the project also contributes towards SDG 16 by building inclusive and sustainable institutions.

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NIRAS offices around the world

Our decentralized structure ensures we're always close to our projects. With 51 offices in 27 countries, we maintain strong local ties to clients, experts and organizations in all of our key markets. Building on our motto "we listen, we learn, we deliver", NIRAS is proud to be a long-term partner in the pursuit of growth and prosperity for the countries in which we work and is committed to building partnerships and local capacity, beyond the lifespan of individual projects, to achieve sustainable and equitable future societies.





■ Next generation consultancy

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