



# MDG 3

## MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL

Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

### TARGET

- Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.



Irish Aid  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
An tSeirbhís Eachtracha

Ireland's  
commitment  
to a world  
without poverty  
and hunger

## CURRENT GLOBAL STATUS

- MDG 3 recognises that achieving equality between men and women is crucial to poverty reduction and development. Promoting gender equality is central to achieving all the MDGs but progress on MDG 3 shows variance across targets and regions.
- Of the 1.3 billion people living in poverty around the world, 70% are women. Women work 2/3 of the world's working hours, produce over half of the world's food yet earn only 10% of the world's income and own less than 1% of the world's property.
- Significant improvements have been made in increasing the number of girls accessing primary schooling, but growth in enrolments are not being met by gender parity in retention and completion. Gender parity in primary education has been achieved in two thirds of countries, however the gender gap is more evident in secondary school enrolment.
- In 2008, the ratio of girls to boys in primary education was 96:100 and 95:100 in secondary school. In 1999, the ratios were 91:100 and 88:100. Gender gaps in enrolment are most apparent in sub-Saharan Africa and in Western and Southern Asia. In sub-Saharan Africa, the ratio of girls' to boys' enrolment in secondary education fell from 82 in 1999 to 79 in 2007. Poverty places girls at a distinct disadvantage.
- In the Least Developed Countries nearly twice as many women as men over 15 years of age are illiterate.
- While globally, the share of women in waged employment outside the agricultural sector has continued to increase slowly to reach 41% in 2008, in Sub Saharan Africa, only one in three paid jobs outside the agricultural sector are occupied by women. Women generally fail to access higher-level positions.
- Women predominate in the informal economy and subsistence farming and shoulder a heavy burden of unpaid care work. In sub-Saharan Africa, 64% of women's employment remains in small-scale agriculture.
- Political participation by women is gradually increasing, but the UN notes that mainly whensupported by quotas and other special measures or action. The global share of women in parliament continues to increase slowly and reached 19% in 2010 from 11% in 1995. It is far short of the 30% target that was to be met by 1995, and further still from the MDG target of gender parity.
- Lower levels of education among women and girls, a lack of access to control over resources such as land and credit, violence against women and a lack of participation in decision making continue to hamper progress on gender equality and impedes progress across all the MDG's.

## IRELAND'S POLICY POSITION & RESPONSE

Ireland recognises gender equality as a human right, critical to ensuring poverty reduction and sustainable development. Gender equality is a policy priority for Irish Aid. The goal of Irish Aid's Gender Equality Policy (2004) is to support the achievement of gender equality as an essential component of sustainable human development. In particular Irish Aid aims to; advance equal rights for women and men, eliminate gender inequalities in access to, control of, and benefit from services and support women's equal participation with men in political and economic decision making.

The White Paper on Irish Aid (2006) reaffirms commitments to promoting gender equality throughout the development programme, to mainstreaming gender across all activities, to improving the position of women including their economic status, to work against gender based violence (GBV) and to implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Ireland accepted the MDG 3 "torch" in September 2008. Under this Danish led initiative, Ireland committed to increasing resources for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, intensifying actions on the prevention of GBV and promoting and implementing UNSCR 1325.

To implement the policy, Irish Aid:

- Adopts a 'twin-track approach' of gender mainstreaming together with supporting targeted measures for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Is using the DAC gender equality marker and estimates that 36% of bi-lateral aid in 2008 has gender equality either as a principal or significant policy objective<sup>1</sup>. In 2008, Irish Aid allocated €6.6 million to specific gender equality projects and programmes.
- Has strengthened engagement in policy dialogue both nationally and internationally as a key means of advancing Irish Aid's gender equality objectives.
- Promotes gender equality through engagement with programme countries and support to civil society and multi-lateral partners.
- Promotes women's economic empowerment through the intensification of smallholder agriculture and strengthening farmer organisations, particularly those targeting women.
- Works to improve the position and status of women through funding to women's organisations to ensure those women's needs and interests remain on the agenda.
- Addresses women's practical needs, such as access to health, and provides support to national and community-based health programmes that enable women's access to health services, in parallel to tackling more strategic gender needs around access to and control of power and resources.
- Works with partner governments to Improve access to quality education for both boys and girls.
- Develops strategic multi-sectoral approaches to Gender Based Violence.

## EXAMPLES OF IRISH AID PROGRAMME INTERVENTIONS IN SUPPORT OF MDG 3



NATURE OF INTERVENTION	SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF IRISH AID RESPONSE	RESULTS
<b>ACCESS TO HEALTH AND EDUCATION SERVICES</b>	<p>In Sierra Leone, a fragile state with the highest rates of maternal mortality in the world, at 2000 per 100,000 live births, women have a one in eight chance of dying during childbirth Irish Aid, together with other donors, is supporting the Government of Sierra Leone's plan to provide free health care services for pregnant and lactating women and children as well as support to a number of NGO's involved in health provision. Irish Aid also supports the work of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Kenema Government Hospital in Sierra Leone.</p>	<p>In April 2010, the Government of Sierra Leone launched "Free Health Care Medical Insurance", a system of free healthcare for pregnant and breast-feeding women and children under five. At an initial set up cost of \$19 million, it is expected to save the lives of more than a million mothers and children.</p> <p>The numbers of women giving birth in Kenema hospital has increased from 516 in 2005 to 3047 in 2008 with the numbers of maternal deaths declining from 5.4% in 2005 to .85% of deliveries in 2008.</p>
	<p>In Zambia, Irish Aid provided €14 million to the education sector in 2008 and is supporting the Ministry of Education to strengthen gender mainstreaming in its education policies and strategies.</p>	<p>The net enrolment rate for girls in grades 1-12 increased from 90.28% in 2007 to 92.65%. in 2008</p>

<sup>1</sup>A principal objective means that gender equality was a specific objective of the programme. A significant objective means that gender equality was an important but secondary objective.

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	<p>In Zambia, Irish Aid provided €14 million to the education sector in 2008 and is supporting the Ministry of Education to strengthen gender mainstreaming in its education policies and strategies.</p>	<p>The net enrolment rate for girls in grades 1-12 increased from 90.28% in 2007 to 92.65% in 2008</p>
<b>COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)</b>	<p>In Ireland, as a member of the Joint Consortium on Gender-based Violence, Irish Aid works with humanitarian, human rights and development NGOs as well as the Defence Forces in strengthening institutional responses and sharing learning and best practice on responses to GBV.</p>	<p>The JCGBV has developed guidelines to promote institutionalising responses to GBV and to support Ireland's role to implement UNSCR 1325</p>
	<p>In Sierra Leone, Irish Aid supports the International Rescue Committee (IRC) Rainbo Centres which focuses on GBV prevention and response including community level awareness raising on GBV and direct support to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. This involves providing holistic case management services, individual counselling, social support, referral and advocacy, assistance in accessing health care and justice, skills training and income generating activities. At a national level support is provided to the National Committee to address GBV.</p>	<p>More than 6,000 survivors of sexual assault since March 2003 have been assisted. Rainbo Centre data reflects an important trend towards increased reporting of sexual violence from 465 reports in 2003 to 1,234 in 2008. Of those cases reported to Rainbo Centres in 2008, only 3.1% reached a conviction by the end of the year.</p>
	<p>In order to build knowledge and understanding of how gender inequality and GBV can be combated, Irish Aid is supporting a research project being implemented by "Raising Voices" in Uganda. This project aims to evaluate the impact of community based GBV prevention work on GBV rates in communities.</p>	<p>The baseline survey which surveyed 1586 community members, completed in 2009, found that one third of all women surveyed reported having experienced sexual or physical violence from a partner over the previous year. This data provides detailed evidence about the relationship between gender attitudes and norms and the experience/perpetration of violence to inform the development of future interventions to address GBV as providing a baseline for later evaluation of the interventions</p>
<b>WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT</b>	<p>In Timor Leste, Irish partners with Moris Rasik a local NGO providing micro-credit and saving facilities to 10,189 borrowers and 10,732 savers, 94% of whom are women</p>	<p>he NGO reports that improving household incomes through participation in trading has both improved women's economic position and status, and enabled them to enhance their family and community status by providing funds for important areas such as childrens education.</p>

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<b>WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION</b>	During the 2007 national elections in Timor Leste, Irish Aid worked with UNIFEM to promote women's participation in the elections.	Women now hold 30% of seats in the national parliament, the highest percentage in the region.
<b>GENDER EQUALITY AND AID EFFECTIVENESS.</b>	Irish Aid has contributed to strengthening multi-lateral aid effectiveness by using its role as co-chair of the UN System's Wide Coherence process to influence policy and strategy on the new gender entity.	Negotiations during the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly (2009-2010) resulted in the adoption of a resolution 289 on System wide coherence to establish a new UN gender entity 'UN Women' in July 2010.

**HOW IRISH AID IS STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS TO ADDRESS GENDER INEQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA.**

Irish Aid in South Africa supports a number of sectors; education, health, community development, and with a range of partners including government at national and provincial level, NGOs and other donors in order to strengthen responses to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Addressing gender based violence (GBV) is a key priority of the programme. Irish Aid provides both financial and technical support to the Limpopo Provincial Government Department of Health and Social Development, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) aimed at preventing gender based violence and the reduction of its impact. The programme' approach is twofold, focusing on both tackling issues from a strategic approach as well as supporting provision of improved services.

The programme is building the capacity of the Provincial Department of Health and Social Development in the Limpopo Province to respond to gender based violence and to deepen their understanding of GBV in the Limpopo Province.

Support is also provided to the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) to strengthen evidence based programming on primary prevention interventions in order to address gender-based violence in South Africa. A number of research and policy briefs have been completed. An audit of organisations working on primary prevention activities in South Africa has been established, learning exchanges have taken place between NGOs in South Africa and Uganda and an oral submission was made to the South African Parliament as part of the 10 year review of the Domestic Violence Act.

Support is provided to the Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre (TLAC) for a project which aims to improve access to justice and ensure accountability by the state to abused women in South Africa. Legal and psycho-social services at the pilot site in Acornhoek on the border of Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces are now available at TLAC offices. This also aims to strengthen the referral system between the health and justice sectors, between the South African Police Service (SAPS) and TLAC and between different services for GBV survivors. This has lead to increased referrals by the police for these services, with over half of referrals to TLAC coming from the police. The programme has successfully assisted in the prosecution of a number of rape cases, the resolution of disputes and in improving knowledge of the range of services (justice, legal, health and social) available to survivors and those who are vulnerable in 'rape hot spots'. TLAC undertook research on incidents of reported domestic violence to establish baseline data which will used to strengthen interventions and monitor progress on the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act of 1998. They have also made a submission to the South African parliament on perceived failures in the health sector to address GBV.

A Joint Gender Fund (an initiative by Bilateral Donors, International Non- Governmental Organisations and Foundations), has been established to facilitate a more harmonised scaled up donor response to gender based violence in South Africa in order to increase access to funding for national non-governmental and community based organisations working on gender based violence and the links with HIV and AIDS and poverty. Ireland played a central role in the establishment of this Joint Fund. 11 grants were awarded in 2009.

Irish Aid provides financial and technical support to the Women's Section within the National AIDS Council – the national coordinating body, in order to coordinate, mobilise and strengthen responses that are aimed at addressing gender inequality and promoting empowerment of women in all HIV and AIDS sector responses.



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