Kosovo Women's Network
Serving, Protecting and Promoting the Rights of Women and Girls

KVINNA KVINNA

A GENDERED READING

OF THE 'EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE INSTRUMENT FOR THE PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE'

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ACRONYMS

AD	Action Document
CoTE	Centres of Thematic Expertise
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for the European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
EC	European Commission
EEAS	European External Action Service
EFI	External Financing Instruments
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GFP	Gender Focal Point
HQ	Headquarters
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
KWN	Kosovo Women's Network
NGEMs	National Gender Equality Mechanisms
NIPAC	National IPA Coordinator
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SPD	Sector Planning Documents
WCSOs	Women's civil society organizations

INTRODUCTION

In 2017, the European Commission's (EC) Thematic Expertise, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of the Directorate-General for the European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) commissioned an 'External Evaluation of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II)' (hereafter referred to as 'Evaluation') in order to inform the ongoing Mid-term Review of European Union (EU) External Financing Instruments. The Common Implementing Regulation requires such an evaluation by the end of 2017, as a midpoint in the implementation of the 2014-2020 IPA II programming.

In 2015, the EC and the European External Action Service (EEAS) adopted the *Joint Staff Working Document - Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020*, known as the Gender Action Plan (GAPII).[1] A key aim of GAPII is 'Institutional Culture Shift', namely 'shifting the Commission services' and the EEAS' institutional culture to more effectively deliver on EU commitments'. GAPII thus calls for 'all EU external spending, programming and policy making' to use 'robust gender evidence'. Additionally, GAP II states that 'all actions, whatever aid modalities (e.g. Budget Support)' should be informed by 'strong and rigorous gender analysis that is reflected in the final programme implementation'.

In accordance with GAPII, the Evaluation of IPAII should contain gender analysis. Gender analysis is essential for understanding possible gender inequalities in all sectors, which can enable improving the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of actions. Thus, the Evaluation also should reflect on the extent to which EU delegations (EUDs) have used gender analysis to inform interventions in all sectors.

> **Definition: Gender Analysis**
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> *'The study of differences in the conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources and development, control of assets, decision-making powers, etc. between women and men in their assigned gender roles'.*
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> - European Commission[2]

Other key features of GAPII include involvement of women's civil society organizations (WCSOs) and National Gender Equality Mechanisms (NGEMs) in all stages of programming; support to WCSOs and women human rights defenders; and increased 'dedicated funding to improve results for girls and women'. Thus, the Evaluation also should discuss the extent to which EUDs have addressed these GAPII indicators, considering their relationship to IPA programming.

> **Key Features of GAPII for IPAII**
> - Gender analysis to inform *all* programming
> - Involve WCSOs and NGEMs
> - Support WCSOs
> - Increase dedicated funding, improving results for girls and women

This paper examines the extent to which the Evaluation contained relevant gender analysis in accordance with GAPII. It comments on key findings and recommendations of the Evaluation from a gender perspective and in relation to aims set forth in GAPII. The paper concludes with recommendations on how to better mainstream gender into IPA programming, thereby improving implementation of GAPII in 2018-2020. Therefore, this paper seeks 'to inform the future programming and implementation of the current EFIs [External Financing Instruments], as well as the next generation of the EFIs', as per the second objective of the Evaluation.

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[1] EC, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, SWD(2015) 182, Brussels, at: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/staff-working-document-gender-2016-2020-20150922_en.pdf.
[2] EC, 'Glossary of Gender and Development Terms', at: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/toolkit-mainstreaming-gender-section-3_en.pdf.

FINDINGS

METHODOLOGICAL SHORTCOMINGS OF THE EVALUATION

As part of the Evaluation methodology, the authors stated that they consulted stakeholders 'at all relevant levels'. However, evaluators met only 14 CSOs, seemingly only one dealing with gender equality (the Association of Monitoring Gender Equality in Turkey). No NGEMs were consulted. Thus, the Evaluation did not involve adequate consultation with WCSOs or NGEMs, as encouraged by GAPII.

A close reading of the Evaluation suggests that evaluators did not use gender analysis to inform the Evaluation[3]. For example, the Evaluation uses the word 'gender' 11 times, but 'women', 'girls', 'men' or 'boys' are not mentioned at all. Further, the word 'gender' primarily appears in the section on 'mainstreaming'[4] and gender considerations are not mainstreamed throughout the report, as this paper later illustrates.

THE RELEVANT POLICY FRAMEWORK

In relation to the relevant policy context, gender has not been mainstreamed within the 2016 Enlargement Strategy; gender is mentioned briefly only in the fundamental rights section. This may relate in part to the fact that the 2016 Enlargement Strategy, adopted in December 2015, preceded the GAPII, which began in 2016. Annex 2 of the 2015 Enlargement Strategy details a new reporting structure that focuses on fundamentals, assigning a five-tier standard assessment scale for the state of play and progress in the past 12 months. For many areas, there are sub-issues (potential sub-indicators) defined, where indicators relating to gender quality could be incorporated, but have not been. The absence of a gender perspective in the Enlargement Strategy as a key document arguably hampers integration of a gender perspective in the enlargement process and IPA programming more specifically.

Every year, progress reports are prepared for IPA II beneficiaries, assessing achievements towards accession. All this could be rather easily gender-assessed and the indicators gender-mainstreamed. However, evaluators note that progress reports are not always sufficiently linked to programming and planned performance results.[5] Linkages between progress reports and IPA programming also should be reviewed from a gender perspective, so that gender inequalities and issues identified in progress reports are addressed in IPA programming, including attention to progress on GAPII indicators within reports. Experience suggests that harmonizing progress reports with IPA programming from a gender perspective has been little considered.[6]

RELEVANCE: 'FUNDAMENTALS FIRST', GENDER EQUALITY LATER?

In terms of relevance, the Evaluation highlights the 'fundamentals first' approach, which focuses on 'strengthening the rule of law, including the fight against corruption and organised crime, good governance and public administration reform, as well as economic governance

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[3] Discussed as a missed opportunity by the EP Report on EU funds for gender equality (2016/2144 (INI)), Rapporteur: MEP Clare Moody, paras 70-71.

[4] Section 'JC22: IPA II mainstreams EU policy priorities (e.g. gender, climate change) and other issues highlighted for mainstreaming in the instrument Regulation (IPA II Regulation, preamble)', (p. 14).

[5] Evaluation, p. 22.

[6] KWN experience in Kosovo and interviews in WB, September-October 2017. For example, progress reports continually have identified women's high unemployment rates, low representation in government and gender-based violence, respectively, as issues of concern, but institutions have not put forth clear objectives to address these issues within IPAII Sector Planning Documents (SPDs) or Action Documents (ADs).

and competitiveness'. This approach often has lacked sufficient gender perspective,[7] which may undermine the relevance and effectiveness of actions. A recurring theme among EU representatives in the region was that 'fundamental' issues must be tackled first, as political priorities, after which 'softer' issues like gender equality can be addressed.[8] This suggests a persisting lack of knowledge and understanding among many EU officials regarding what gender mainstreaming involves. Indeed, little understanding seems to exist that addressing gender inequalities *as part of programming* (rather than separately, or as secondary to 'fundamental' priorities) can enhance relevance and effectiveness.

CHALLENGES TO GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN IPA PROGRAMMING

The IPAII regulation requires that funds address the 'horizontal issues' of 'gender, climate change, environment, minorities, people with disabilities, [and] LGBT groups', among others. Thus, a section of the Evaluation discusses gender mainstreaming in IPA programming.[9] Evaluators found challenges in programming regarding 'how best to mainstream these themes into IPA II actions'.[10] Indeed, experience and evidence from the WB suggest several shortcomings related to mainstreaming gender in IPA programming, detailed in this section.

INSUFFICIENT HUMAN RESOURCES

In most WB countries, insufficient human resources have been allocated in order to ensure that gender mainstreaming is done properly. Gender mainstreaming requires expertise and time, which few delegations have allocated sufficiently. The gender focal point (GFP) position, existing within all EUDs, always is a secondary position or 'another hat' added on to an existing employee's other responsibilities.[11] In only one instance was a GFP's responsibilities included in her official job description. Thus, responsibilities related to gender mainstreaming are secondary to GFPs' other tasks. Few GFPs have expertise or prior experience with gender mainstreaming. Thus, GFPs have not had the time or expertise to screen IPA programming documents, ensuring quality control from a gender perspective. Some missions have addressed resource shortages by contracting external assistance, such as from the Kosovo Women's Network (KWN) in Kosovo.

> **Best Practice: Contracting Gender Expertise**
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> In Kosovo, the EUD contracted KWN to mainstream gender in Sector Planning Documents (SPDs) and Action Documents (ADs), as well as to provide a helpdesk, building capacities of the EUD, ministries and NGEMs in gender mainstreaming and GAPII implementation. This has improved gender mainstreaming in SPDs and ADs and enhanced capacities among officials. It is an efficient and effective Service Contract at €70,000 for 30 months (negotiated procedure).

WEAK GENDER ANALYSIS

The GAPII calls for gender analysis to inform all IPA programming. While general country gender analyses have been conducted in most WB countries, sector-specific gender analysis has been lacking. Without gender analyses, it is very difficult to plan relevant and effective actions in different sectors.

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[7] KWN conclusion based on review of Kosovo SPDs, ADs, and interviews in WB (2017).
[8] KWN interviews in WB, September-October 2017.
[9] Section 3.2.7: 'IPA II mainstreams EU policy priorities (e.g. gender, climate change) and other issues highlighted for mainstreaming'.
[10] Evaluation, p. 14.
[11] KWN interviews in WB.

CROSSCUTTING DOES NOT EQUATE TO MAINSTREAMING

IPA programming documents contain a section related to 'cross-cutting' themes, where gender is mentioned. However, this is insufficient for properly mainstreaming gender within IPA programmes. EU and government officials tend to consider this section a 'formality' or 'box-ticking exercise', according to which the same, general template text usually is 'copy/pasted' into all SPDs and ADs.[12] Few SPDs or ADs mainstream gender in other document sections, such as attending to gender inequalities in the situation analysis, identifying objectives to address such inequalities in actions, and incorporating indicators in results frameworks. The lack of objectives and indicators within project documents hinders accountability in reporting on progress towards gender equality later on.

WEAK CAPACITIES

Most IPA programmers at country desks and within delegations lack knowledge, understanding and expertise for gender mainstreaming. Intersectionalities are even less understood or considered (e.g., how Roma women and Roma men, or girl and boy migrants may face very different problems that require a particular approach in programming). Similarly, beneficiaries, including line ministries and IPA coordination mechanisms, lack knowledge and expertise for gender mainstreaming. As beneficiaries (should) draft the original IPA programming documents prior to review by the delegation, they must understand the importance that the EU places on gender analysis and gender mainstreaming in IPA programming. Otherwise, they will not ensure gender analysis and mainstreaming within the documents. If gender is not mainstreamed into actions at the outset of the programming exercise, it is difficult to add it in later on. 'Adding in' gender to already finalized documents allows for only 'superficial' comments related to language and sex-disaggregated data, rather than informing the actual content of Actions, such as objectives and indicators.[13] When gender equality were introduced into programming at the EUD level, task managers in Brussels reportedly sometimes removed this information as being extraneous or too far removed from the intentions of programs.[14]

Broader capacity challenges, such as beneficiaries' lack of understanding regarding the sector approach, poor capacities in producing and using indicators, and 'struggle' in producing good quality documents,[16] all further hamper their ability for gender mainstreaming. Insufficient understanding of logic influences inabilities to use gender analysis to inform logical approaches for addressing gender inequalities in programming.

> **Finding: Weak Capacities, Untimely Intervention in IPA Documents**
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> '*The Centres of Thematic Expertise (CoTE) and other thematic cells (dealing with gender and Roma) created within DG NEAR offer considerable potential for more effective mainstreaming of key horizontal themes in IPA programming. However, the extent to which they can be proactive in this role is conditioned by their capacities, which are not always optimal. [N]ot all CoTEs and similar 'units' linked to Roma and gender are […] well resourced. Small staff numbers and relatively limited knowledge of IPA II mean in several cases they are reduced to providing comments to the Action Document (AD) fairly late in the programming cycle. Whilst this has some value, it provides only limited possibilities for the CoTEs and other units to influence the final shape of the AD. Their earlier engagement in the programming process, as well as regular engagement with programmers in the IPA beneficiaries to increase their awareness of horizontal issues, would increase their overall effectiveness but this is again conditioned by their staff and financial resources.*'[15]

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[12] KWN experience and interviews in WB.

[13] Ibid. If used at all, rarely could comments from gender experts lead to substantial changes to the content of documents, as documents already had been finalized.

[14] KWN experience and interviews in WB, 2017.

[15] Evaluation, pp. 11, 15.

[16] Evaluation, p. iii-iv.

PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES: INVOLVING WCSOS AND NGEMS

The GAPII calls for improved involvement of NGEMs and WCSOs as key stakeholders in IPA programming. In terms of good practice, participatory approaches also should involve consultations with WCSOs, as well as women and men beneficiaries, in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of IPA programming. A potential key entry-point for NGEMs and WCSOs could be their involvement in Sector Working Groups, responsible for planning IPA programming.

The Evaluation notes that many beneficiary countries have struggled to organize functioning Sector Working Groups and coordination mechanisms, though EUDs and/or National IPA Coordinators (NIPACs) 'organise consultations and information meetings with CSOs and the donor community, regarding the preparation of IPA II Programming'.[17] Evaluators noted that IPA II has demonstrated 'stronger involvement of the civil society in the IPA II programming processes at country level'.[18] However, evidence suggests that WCSOs and NGEMs rarely if ever have participated in Sector Working Groups.[19] There has been insufficient consultation with women, WCSOs and NGEMs regarding most sector strategies, national action plans, and/or IPA programming.[20] Insufficient involvement of WCSOs and NGEMs in the policy process can undermine effectiveness, impact and sustainability of programming, as it may mean that the particular needs of women are not considered and that women are insufficiently involved in program implementation, undermining change.

A major challenge to ensuring participatory processes related to IPA programming is the fact that many public servants, NGEMs and WCSOs lack English language skills that would enable them to review documents and contribute to these processes. Seldom have programming timeframes allowed sufficient time for translation and public consultation. Insufficient understanding of IPA programming documents due to language limitations may impede their proper implementation later on.

Moreover, a common underlying assumption is that WCSOs, as well as women and men beneficiaries, have sufficient knowledge, access to information, and resources to participate actively in IPA programming processes. Related to participation, an under-considered input is the time of WCSOs.[21] In order to participate in processes related to IPA programming, WCSOs need sufficient time, therefore human resources, to: review relevant documents; identify the needs of the groups they represent; attend meetings; provide quality, evidence-based input; and monitor IPA programming overall. While EUDs welcome WCSOs' input and often state that WCSOs should be 'more involved' in such processes,[22] rarely have EUDs budgeted for the affiliated human resources costs.

POOR REACH IN COMMUNICATING THE AIMS OF EU ACCESSION

Evaluators noted that, 'beneficiary governments need to communicate better to their public what the EU accession and membership means'.[23] While they should be key partners in following, communicating publicly and supporting implementation of reforms, WCSOs generally

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[17] Evaluation, p. 20.
[18] Evaluation, p. 10.
[19] KWN interviews in WB, 2017.
[20] Ibid. An exception in some countries related to programming on related specifically to gender equality and/or women's rights (e.g., addressing gender-based violence). However, WCSOs and NGEMs involvement in planning for other sectors was rare.
[21] With regard to 'inputs' required for implementation of IPA II, evaluators identify the need for 'human resources (of all stakeholders)' (p. 4).
[22] KWN interviews with EUDs throughout the region, September-October 2017.
[23] Evaluation, p. 24.

lack information about the EU accession process and reforms.[24] The extent to which communications materials reach diverse women and men has been under-considered.

INADEQUATE GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

One of the Evaluation's conclusions relates to budget support, stating that it has been a catalyst for institutional changes in countries where it is being delivered (e.g. Serbia, Montenegro, Albania). In line with GAPII, EUDs should hold countries responsible for gender responsive budgeting by requiring indicators related to furthering gender equality among the indicators tied to budget support. However, it does not seem that this has been a practice to date. Moreover, WCSOs report that policy dialogues surrounding budget support have not been transparent, and WCSOs have not been involved sufficiently in such discussions.[25]

INSUFFICIENT MONITORING AND EVALUATION, WEAK INDICATORS

Evaluators noted that beneficiary countries have not yet put in place monitoring and evaluation systems for IPA II. Officially, IPA II Monitoring Committees exist at country and sector level. However, the extent to which women and men have been involved in Monitoring Committees is unclear in the Evaluation. Evidence suggests that Monitoring Committees have lacked a gender balance, except in sectors where women tend to be over-represented (e.g., related to social policy in some countries). Gender balance within these committees, particularly the involvement of NGEMs from within the sector and/or gender experts from civil society, is important for helping committees access appropriate data, better understand the needs of target groups and beneficiaries, and to better monitor the implementation of programming.

Evaluators found that 'important elements linked to data access, collection and analysis are largely absent'.[26] Further, they concluded that 'weaknesses in the quality of indicators in country programmes and ADs remain. This is also due to the lack of capacity of the country/ sector systems to produce, collect and analyse data appropriate for this level'.[27] More specifically, 'weaknesses are evident in the quality of outcome indicators, which often lack elements such as baselines, milestones and targets.'[28]

All of these issues complicate monitoring and evaluation from a gender perspective, particularly ensuring inclusion of indicators towards gender equality and sex-disaggregated indicators. GAPII establishes and encourages use of specific indicators relating to gender equality, including some Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators. IPA programming rarely has used these indicators to date.[29] A general problem is that gender sensitive output indicators may be identified, but outcome or impact level indicators that would better align with GAPII seldom are set. This is due in part to the more general issue that indicator tables within IPA programming templates do not clearly require indicators at all levels of logic. Identifying suitable indicators relating to gender equality for output, outcome and impact levels was a recurring challenge voiced by EU delegations (EUDs) and government counterparts, who requested support in finding better, sector-specific indicators.[30] The insufficient incorporation of GAPII indicators within intervention logics hinders current and future reporting on GAPII because implementers have not been contractually required to collect and report on this information.

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[24] KWN interviews with WCSOs in WB, 2017.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Evaluation, p. 13.
[27] Evaluation, pp. iii-iv.
[28] Evaluation, p. 22.
[29] KWN interviews in WB, 2017.
[30] Ibid.

Several stakeholders also noted the aforementioned issue of accessing, collecting and analysing data disaggregated by sex, as well.[31]

PERFORMANCE AWARD RELATING TO GAPII?

IPA II foresees a potential performance reward as 'an annual amount of up to 10% of the total annual IPA II allocation' in 2017 and 2020.[32] According to the evaluators, 'The basis for the methodology of the performance reward will be the "IPA II Performance Framework" that has been set up by DG NEAR and which provides the general context for monitoring and reporting in the context of IPA II.' GAPII also foresees performance awards.[33] The extent to which these two award systems have been aligned is unclear.

UNALIGNED TIMEFRAMES, PROGRAMMING CYCLES AND WEAK FLEXIBILITY

While flexible with respect to humanitarian crises, evaluators otherwise note that 'IPA II is less flexible. Programming documents can be revised, although this is backed up by a relatively complex approval process'.[34] This suggests that programming for addressing issues identified through country gender analyses in the region, if not included in the initial programming, may take time. Meanwhile, the timeframe of GAPII does not align with IPA II programming and countries' already-existing sector strategies. Among EUD representatives there is understandable hesitancy to include GAPII aims in sector programs when beneficiary countries already have their own country priorities and sector strategies in place.[35] EUD representatives did not want to 'force' GAPII upon countries, who should be taking the lead and ownership in IPA programming. The fact that the GAPII is *only* an EC document is a substantial fundamental challenge hampering implementation of GAPII; beneficiary countries have no legally binding reason to ensure GAPII is implemented in IPA II programming.

Programming and affiliated resource allocation begin years prior to implementation. With regular programming cycles, gender analyses conducted in relation to the GAPII to identify objectives in 2016 may only be included into programming documents in 2017, adopted for 2018. Thus, in most places resourcing for progress on GAPII would begin implementation only in 2018-2020. Any progress on GAPII (if addressed in programming at all) will become observable only after four to five years, when the GAPII is expiring.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IPAII AS PER GAPII

FOR DG NEAR

- Send a clear message to Ambassadors, Heads of Cooperation, Heads of Political Sections and all delegation employees involved in political dialogue and programming that <u>ensuring gender mainstreaming in all sectors and programming is *part of* the 'fundamentals first' agenda</u>, and not secondary to it; and that as per GAPII, they have a responsibility to raise gender equality issues as part of political dialogues on different issues.

- Carefully review and revise <u>timeframes for programming</u>, towards ensuring that diverse stakeholders have time to review documents in their own languages and to participate in

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[31] Ibid.
[32] Evaluation, p. 16.
[33] 'Guidance Note on the EU Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 for NEAR HQ and EUD staff,' April 2016.
[34] Evaluation, p. 17.
[35] KWN interviews in WB.

programming. Ideally, public consultations already should have taken place during the process of creating sector strategies, and IPA-funded programs should merely implement existing state strategies. However, given the often insufficient public participation in drafting sector strategies, particularly women's under-involvement, consultative processes involving WCSOs and NGEMs should be ensured in line with GAPII.

- Amend templates (e.g., SPDs, ADs and Progress Reports) to require gender analysis, objectives and sex-disaggregated indicators more clearly in logical frameworks and indicator tables (not only as 'cross-cutting themes').[36] This can include ensuring reporting on indicators in line with GAPII.

- When working to clarify the sector planning approach and quality of documents,[37] ensure this includes capacity development for gender mainstreaming within sectors. Related, if convening 'a meeting of all EUDs and NIPACs at HQ to clarify the purpose of the sector planning approach', include gender experts and a brief presentation on inclusion of GAPII indicators in sector documents.

- In developing clearer guidance on 'the establishment of sector monitoring systems' for beneficiary countries,[38] mainstream gender within this guidance by setting minimum standards for involving NGEMs and WCSOs, as well as for reporting on indicators that involve sex-disaggregated data and demonstrate progress towards gender equality, as per GAPII.

- Define in detail the 'responsibilities of institutions engaged in the collection, submission, analysis and presentation of monitoring data',[39] including responsibilities related to sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis. Monitoring and evaluation systems need to incorporate sex-disaggregated data and indicators from the outset.

- Allocate adequate human resources, including time and expertise for gender mainstreaming in IPA programs. Improve knowledge and understanding of gender mainstreaming in Brussels and among program officers. Include responsibilities for gender mainstreaming in all job descriptions.

- Organize training and coaching for desk officers in Brussels, EUDs and country beneficiaries, respectively, in formulating viable indicators related to gender equality at different levels of logic.[40] This should include an intersectional approach to potential inequalities towards informing actions that meet the needs of diverse beneficiaries.

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[36] KWN has developed suggested changes to be made.
[37] Evaluation, Recommendation 2.
[38] Evaluation, Recommendation 5.
[39] Evaluation, p. 40.
[40] This relates to the recommendation: 'DG NEAR to continuously support the NIPACs, EUDs and SLIs in reviewing and improving the sector performance indicators to ensure they are fit for purpose'; such training should include discussion of SMART gender equality indicators.

- Develop <u>guidelines on how 'horizontal themes</u> should be integrated early in the programming of IPA II', complementing 'changes made to the quality review process, recently adopted by DG NEAR'. [41] These guidelines should require gender analysis; mandatory consultations with WCSOs and NGEMs; mechanisms for involving local gender expertise; quality review from a gender perspective; and obligatory reporting on the gender marker, as well as identified objectives and indicators related to GAPII.

> **Best Practice: Gender Mainstreaming Quality Control**
> The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) contracts a gender expert to review all programs, advising counterparts on how to better reflect a gender perspective within Project Documents. ADA monitors implementation of the expert's recommendations as part of mandatory reporting later on, ensuring accountability in furthering gender equality. ADA also is asking funding recipients to report on progress on SDGs and the GAPII, introducing indicators into all new intervention logics.

- The recommendation for <u>'optimising the capacities of the CoTEs</u> in line with IPA II programming needs'[42] should include having experts to check, assist and act as a helpdesk function related to furthering gender equality within programming. No CoTE presently seems to focus specifically on gender equality. Within Directorate A., section 3., Thematic Support, Monitoring and Evaluation, the EU has appointed a Policy Assistant on Gender Equality who could perform this function. However, given the number of IPA programs, additional human resources would be required to effectively mainstream gender in all IPA programs. Hypothetically, a gender CoTE could screen all IPA programs to ensure that gender has been sufficiently mainstreamed within them, and provide guidance in areas where further gender mainstreaming is required. Notably, a similar practice exists within some member states, such as Austria (see box). At the same time, gender experts in EUDs and CoTEs may need further training in how IPA programming works in order to provide useful input. Reviews must be done in close coordination with local gender equality experts who know the specificities of gender inequalities within their countries (see below).

- In implementing the Evaluation recommendation for a longer-term perspective,[43] <u>budget for long-term support to WCSOs.</u>[44] If the EU wants quality participation and evidence-based input related to programming (and the accession process more broadly), WCSOs need financing for human resource costs, enabling them to better engage in this process. Delegations could be encouraged to use the Civil Society Facility for providing more Operating Grants to WCSOs under strategic Framework Partnership Agreements (see below). If DG NEAR follows the Evaluation recommendation to re-establish the Development Cooperation Instrument programme for CSOs and Local Authorities,[45] it should earmark funding for WCSOs.

- <u>Integrate the performance award processes</u> under IPA II and GAPII by including progress on GAPII indicators within criteria for awarding the overall performance reward. This could be measured transparently and accurately based on the extent to which progress was made on predetermined GAPII objectives.

- Monitor and ensure EU delegations implement the following recommendations.

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[41] Evaluation recommendation 3.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Evaluation, Recommendation 1.
[44] KWN in close consultation with counterparts in the region and the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation has developed a policy paper on funding related to this recommendation (2017).
[45] Evaluation, Recommendation 6.

- Encourage governments to <u>improve alignment of Progress Reports, National Strategies, IPA Programming and GAPII</u> with regard to gender equality, among other issues. Gender inequalities identified in one should be reflected in others.

- Ensure <u>budget support includes indicators related to gender equality</u> and use of gender responsive budgeting.

- Actively encourage government officials to inform, consult and involve <u>WCSOs and NGEMs</u> in:
  - Creating sector strategies and action plans, including as permanent members of <u>sector working groups</u>, which will enable them to: 1) raise awareness among officials and experts involved in drafting SPDs/ADs regarding GAPII objectives and indicators relevant to the sector, which should be incorporated from the outset; 2) help identify areas where gender analysis is needed in accordance with GAPII; and 3) propose areas where gender should be mainstreamed within documents from the outset.
  - Monitoring Committees.
  - NIPAC, even as observers.

  In accordance with GAPII, EUDs should not assume that government counterparts have undertaken sufficient consultations with diverse target groups and beneficiaries. It should be the responsibility of the EUD as part of quality control to ensure that sufficient consultations have been undertaken with WCSOs and NGEMs, as well as to use its political clout to encourage government officials to consult with all stakeholders, towards planning better quality documents and programs. This is not optional, but rather required by GAPII. Earlier engagement of gender expertise in the programming process should <u>not</u> be considered an 'additional workload',[46] but rather as a required part of programming, as set forth in the GAPII.

- Contract or hire gender expertise for <u>quality assurance</u>, including local gender experts who understand local nuances. Contracting local gender expertise can be more efficient and effective than bringing international experts. Local experts can provide vital statistics, qualitative information and insight into programming. The contracting of KWN to provide such expert services to the EUD in Kosovo provides an example of a best practice.

- Contract gender experts with experience mainstreaming gender in IPA programming to provide <u>technical support and coaching to NGEMs</u> related to mainstreaming gender in IPA programming. This will contribute to furthering their capacities to participate in such processes, as foreseen by GAPII.

- Ensure that <u>gender analysis is carried out</u> related to most if not all sectors and used to inform objectives, results and indicators towards furthering gender equality in IPA programs. This should include an intersectional approach to potential inequalities.

- <u>Increase Civil Society Facility use of Operating Grants under Framework Partnership Agreements</u> with competitively selected CSOs that have reputations, constituencies and strategies for working on long-term social and policy reforms. Earmark funds for WCSOs. Related to the evaluators' recommendation 'for a longer-term perspective in implementation […] over several years',[47] forming strategic partnerships with civil society, including WCSOs, would address aforementioned human resource shortages, while enabling them

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[46] Evaluation, p. 15.
[47] Evaluation, Recommendation 1, p. 44.

to monitor government officials, the implementation of IPA programming, its impact on diverse target groups and progress in the sectors on which they focus over time. Additionally, a long-term approach to funding for WCSOs and movements would enable them to contribute to social change at an impact level, which takes time.

- While responsibilities to ensure <u>availability of information in local languages</u> lie with beneficiary countries, EUDs can encourage translation of IPA documents into local languages and their public distribution (e.g., online availability), towards transparency. This also can facilitate appropriate implementation and civil society monitoring later on, as responsible officials and citizens will know what such documents contain.

- In close consultation with WCSOs and NGEMs, identify ways to better <u>reach diverse women and men with information about the EU Accession process</u>. Better engage WCSOs in communication and outreach efforts.

LOOKING FORWARD: LONG-TERM ADVICE FOR GAP III AND IPA III

- In the future, better align and integrate the <u>timeframes for GAPIII and IPA III</u> (and other financing instruments). This can facilitate the identification and use of harmonized objectives and indicators.

- Ensure that <u>GAPIII builds on and is a continuation of GAPII</u> (considering lessons learned), so that funding for GAP III can enter into planning phases as early as 2018-2019.

ABOUT THE KOSOVO WOMEN'S NETWORK

The Kosovo Women's Network (KWN) is a local WCSO that involves a network of 126 diverse women's organizations throughout Kosovo. Contracted by the EUD in Kosovo, since 2015 KWN has provided technical assistance and expertise to the EUD, Ministry for European Integration, Agency for Gender Equality in the Office of the Prime Minister, Gender Equality Officers and line ministries in mainstreaming gender in IPA programming in Kosovo. As part of its 'help-desk' function, KWN also supported development of the EU Gender Action Plan for 2016-2020 in Kosovo. Meanwhile, supported by the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, KWN has provided input from a gender perspective into Kosovo's progress reports, European Reform Agenda, political dialogues and National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement in Kosovo. In order to inform this and other papers, KWN conducted interviews with 92 representatives of EUDs, WCSOs, NGEMs, and relevant government counterparts in six WB countries in September and October 2017, supported by the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation. For further information about KWN, please visit: www.womensnetwork.org.

ABOUT THE KVINNA TILL KVINNA FOUNDATION

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation is a peace and women's rights organisation without any political or religious affiliations. Kvinna till Kvinna supports and cooperates with women's rights organisations that work for women's rights and peace. We do advocacy on women's rights and the importance of women's inclusion in discussions and decision-making on peace and security. Kvinna till Kvinna was founded in 1993, when reports of mass rapes in the Balkan wars reached Sweden. The women's movement in Sweden made a joint appeal under the name of Kvinna till Kvinna, which was followed by a series of fundraising initiatives to support women's rights organisations operating in the Balkans. Since then, we have grown considerably. We now support more than 100 women's rights organisations and women's rights defenders all over the world.