



Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States

OECS COMMISSION GENDER POLICY

Programme Management Unit



Organisation of
Eastern Caribbean States



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1. Purpose

The Gender Policy of the Commission of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) builds on the organisational Gender Mainstreaming Policy of 2013 (GEM) and will boost efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. This policy is intended to promote gender equality in the Eastern Caribbean as well as to define key commitments, principles and expected outcomes. It is to be aspirational, inspirational and practical for both the internal operations of the OECS Commission and its external relations, including with Member States.

Given its broader development, coordination and technical mandate, the Commission is uniquely positioned to support OECS Member States (MS) in achieving gender equality, notably by fostering women's economic empowerment, ensuring non-discrimination based on sex or gender, and promoting diversity, equity and inclusion for all, to ensure that gender is more effectively mainstreamed in all aspects of development in the region for the benefit of all individuals irrespective of sex or gender .

The ambition is for an OECS Commission that is consistently gender-responsive in its approach to development including the use of financial and technical resources for internal and external purposes.

This Policy requires staff of all units and divisions of the OECS Commission to use a gender equality lens systematically and explicitly in the design and implementation of regional programmes.

The goal of the Policy is to ensure that the Commission is able to meet normative and technical commitments related to gender equality and through its development work promote gender equity and the achievement of gender equality to guarantee equal rights, status and responsibilities between all individuals irrespective of sex or gender in the OECS Economic Union.

Building on the stated objectives of the 2013 GEM, it seeks to:

- Establish a clear mandate, implementation systems, capabilities, resources, and mechanisms of accountability at all levels required to guarantee that the Commission's policies and programmes are gender-responsive;
- Create a visible institutional culture of GEWE at the OECS by mainstreaming gender-responsive actions into the daily management practices of the OECS Commission;
- Foster and support the capacity of OECS Member States to examine and address gender issues while formulating policies for the political, social, cultural, environmental and economic development of the OECS Economic Union;
- Ensure equal participation of all individuals irrespective of sex or gender in opportunities and in the benefits from the implementation of the OECS Economic Union and other related policies and programmes; and
- Promote values that lead to the attainment of a culture of gender justice, mutual care, peace, harmony and lives free of violence among all individuals irrespective of sex or



gender in the home and in communities and the institutions of the Member States of the OECS Economic Union.

2. Scope

This Policy refers to all aspects of work of the OECS Commission.

The OECSC Gender Policy commits the organisation, its staff, its governance mechanisms, its contractors, its partners and its stakeholders to:

- Both gender equality and gender equity, where equality is the destination and equity as the path;
- Inclusiveness in all its activities;
- Accountability for gender equality and gender parity in general;
- Full ownership of the policy through its alignment with the sub-regional context, national policies and priorities, and engagement with diverse voices;
- Engaging with actors and stakeholders, including women's organisations, to work on gender and the intersectionality between gender and other issues;
- Ensuring adequate gender expertise to support the operationalization of the proposed frameworks and policy and the consistent application of a gender lens throughout its work; and
- Allocating sufficient resources so that all individuals irrespective of sex or gender internally and externally benefit from how the Commission works to meet its principal objectives and benefit in an equitable manner.

3. Background and justification

The OECS is an International Inter-governmental Organisation dedicated to economic harmonisation and integration, protection of human and legal rights, and the encouragement of good governance among independent and non-independent countries in the Eastern Caribbean comprising Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, with the British Virgin Islands, Anguilla, Martinique and Guadeloupe as associate members of the OECS. As such, the Commission has a fundamental role to play in the sustainable future of its Member States and their citizens, including the achievement of gender-inclusive and gender-equitable development.

This Policy specifically addresses various gaps with regards to the integration and mainstreaming of gender in the OECS's policies and programming work. Previous policies, including the GEM, largely defined gender equality and women's economic empowerment (GEWE) as a social and economic issue and therefore, put more emphasis on those areas. This new Gender Policy addresses this gap by broadening the institutional framework to include these issues, as well as operational matters, such as procurement and finance.

Prioritizing gender over other forms of social exclusion does not imply that other categories of exclusion are de-emphasized. On the contrary, gender serves as a useful analytical tool to



examine other forms of social exclusion. It intersects with other factors such as age, class, disability and ethnicity and it also shapes people's choices, opportunities, risks and benefits. While gender inequality harms all people, individuals at the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination are mostly affected, as the negative impacts combine and compound deprivation. In a crisis situation, the negative effects tend to be more pronounced, especially among women and girls. This Policy recognizes that the elimination of inequalities affecting women and girls, but also men and boys, in the OECS Economic Union requires deliberate and specific action to explicitly tackle the differences between these groups and the role that gender places in shaping their experiences.

4. Definitions

The basic concepts that support and underpin this Policy are:

Gender: refers to the socially constructed roles, rights, competencies, expectations, responsibilities and norms usually for men and women, girls and boys, and the differences and the relationship between them. This includes how such norms influence or shape unequal power relations, access to resources and participation in decision-making.

Gender equality: refers to equal rights, power, access, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, boys and girls, and equal consideration for the interests, needs and priorities for all individuals irrespective of sex or gender. Therefore, gender equality implies that society values all individuals and the roles that they play equally. Equality does not mean that women and men, girls and boys should be the same, but rather that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities should not depend on their sex at birth. Gender equality recognises the diversity of different groups and gender identities.

Gender equity: refers to the process of being fair to all individuals irrespective of their sex or gender. To ensure equity, measures often need to be taken to compensate for (or reduce) disparity for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men, girls and boys from otherwise operating on an equitable basis. Equity, therefore, leads to equality as a legal right and obligation. Gender equity involves eliminating all forms of discrimination based on sex.

Gender sensitivity: refers to the understanding of the ways in which people think about gender and the sociocultural factors underlying gender inequality, and how they might be addressed. Gender sensitivity implies a consideration of the potential contribution of women and men to societal changes, as well as the methods and tools used to promote gender equity, reduce gender disparities and measure the impact of development activities on men and women.

Gender-responsive: means that instead of only identifying gender issues or working under the “do no harm” principle, the process or action will substantially help to overcome historical gender biases — to “do better,” so to speak — so that women can truly engage in and benefit from these actions. In addition, gender-responsive planned actions should include promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, fostering women's inclusion and providing equal opportunities for women and men to achieve social and economic benefits. Under this approach, women and men's concerns and experiences become fundamental elements that have equal weight and importance in the design, implementation,



and monitoring and evaluation of projects and policies. Being gender-responsive means going beyond acknowledging gender gaps and taking concrete action to eliminate the discrepancies.

Gender mainstreaming: is a strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of all planned actions - including legislation, policies or programmes - in all areas and at all levels. It aims to make the experiences and concerns of women and men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes to ensure that development interventions benefit women and men equally and do not perpetuate inequality. This often requires specific targeted actions to ensure that women are recognized as important actors and their voices are heard and mechanisms to engage women and men stakeholders of all ages in the design, development and implementation of strategies and activities.

Gender analysis: is a critical examination of how differences in gender norms, roles, power structures, activities, needs, opportunities and rights affect women, girls, boys and men in a given situation or context. It includes collecting and analysing sex-disaggregated data and gender information to understand gender differences and gaps, determine gender-differentiated impacts and risks, identify measures to avoid them and uncover and act on opportunities to address gender gaps and inequalities.

5. Institutional framework

a. Policy Statement

Gender, as compared to sex, is socially constructed and is manifested most significantly in the different roles and responsibilities assigned to women and men in a given culture. Gender equity is the process of being fair to both women and men by creating conditions and opportunities that enable them to enjoy the same status, entitlements, rewards and resources. Gender equality is the destination and gender equity is the path to get there.

Although OECS MS and the Commission have employed robust policies and investments in key areas over the last fifty years, available data underscore two significant barriers to equitable development:

- The persistence of poverty, vulnerability and multiple and intersecting deprivations; and
- Gender inequalities in (i) employment and wages; (ii) access to formal sources of financing or credit; (iii) capacity and capability to recover from economic and environmental shocks; (iv) participation in decision-making and governance mechanisms; and (v) the level of risk of suffering from different forms of sexual and gender-based violence.

The driving factors behind the persistence of these barriers are social and cultural in nature, namely social norms and practices, and their effects are complex in nature. Gender inequality in exposure to economic, social and environmental risks is becoming increasingly



evident and affects primarily women, children, elderly single men and female-headed households.

Recognizing these challenges, this Policy advocates for short, medium and long-term actions designed to bring about a fundamental shift in how the Commission tackles GEWE and how it engages with GEWE operationally and programmatically. Guiding how the Commission will become a change agent for transformative, people-centred and people-smart approaches to development, the Policy values gender equality as a powerful force for transforming the lives of individuals, households, communities and MS. It employs best practices in intersectional analysis, intervention design and monitoring and evaluation in order to scale up the Commission's capacity for gender-responsive prevention and mitigation strategies. It challenges gender stereotypes that restrict opportunities and choices for marginalized groups and communities and informs gender-inclusive approaches to governance of the process of deepening and expanding the OECS Economic Union.

b. Core commitments

This Policy adopts and expands on the commitments embodied in the 2013 OECS GEM Policy. They bind the Commission to:

- Establish an official institutional mandate on GEWE and maintain a formal advisory mechanism in order to promote the integration of gender into all areas of work of the OECS Commission;
- Develop the gender sensitivity of all staff and enhance the capacity of technical staff to undertake gender analysis, gender planning and gender-related research in the Commission's priority areas;
- Provide female and male staff equal opportunities for professional and personal growth, promotion and leadership, as well as equal working conditions and benefits;
- Create a respectful, safe, secure and gender-sensitive workplace, free from discrimination, sexual harassment or other kinds of pressure that are rooted in power relations;
- Make all human resource systems and policies gender sensitive, and fully integrate gender indicators into staff performance appraisals; and
- Consistently integrate gender considerations into all aspects of development and give active support to GEWE initiatives of partner organisations and Member States.

c. Core principles

Ten core principles form the basis of the Policy's philosophical and normative approach to GEWE



The 10 Principles of the OECS Gender Policy



Principle 1 – Commitment: To ensure that its approach to development is gender-responsive, the OECS Commission commits to:

- a) Consistently analysing and understanding the sociocultural factors, norms and practices underlying gender inequalities in the sector, as well as the potential contribution of women and men to sustainable development and broader societal changes;
- b) Adopting methods, approaches and tools to promote gender equality and equity;
- c) Reducing gender disparities in the design, implementation, results and outcomes of its projects and programmes; and
- d) Effectively measuring the outcomes and impacts of its activities on women, girls, men and boys.

Principle 2 – No discrimination, sexual harassment and gender-based violence in the workplace: Respect for human rights is the foundation of the Gender Policy. It recognizes the right of staff, contractors, stakeholder and beneficiaries to be free from all forms of violence and discrimination, including freedom from sexual harassment, abuse of power, sexual exploitation and abuse. This is reflected in the Commission’s HR and procurement policies.

Given the nature of the work of the OECS, its staff and related contractors and stakeholders, the workplace is deemed to also include missions and other spaces where work-related matters are being dealt with officially on behalf of, or with the participation of, the OECS Commission or designated representatives (see more on this in appendix 5).

Principle 3 – Comprehensiveness, in scope and coverage: The Commission’s internal and external actions will be built on robust and comprehensive analysis and solutions will be inclusive and participatory. The OECS Commission will apply its gender policy to all its own projects and actively promote equal opportunities for women and men to participate in stakeholder consultations and decision-making during the preparation, the implementation and the evaluation of projects and programmes.



Principle 4 – Accountability: The OECS Commission is accountable to the OECS Authority and Council of Ministers for gender equality results and outcomes, reporting annually in a transparent manner. It will endeavour to develop and implement qualitative and quantitative gender indicators in its own projects (Appendix 10 serves as a guide for those indicators).

The Commission will implement this Policy while enhancing existing procedures and competencies:

Gender-related complaints and grievances that may arise in project or programme implementation, or at the workplace, are addressed through the Commission’s grievance mechanism.

The Commission’s management and staff are responsible for gender results, as reflected in this Policy.

Principle 5 – Quality Management: The OECS Commission commits to adopt a gender perspective in its human resources management to ensure gender parity in key advisory and decision-making positions. **The Commission will appoint a Gender Team. One team member will act as a gender focal point** to highlight the intersections between gender, economic, social and environmental issues and support the overall coordination and higher-level monitoring of the Policy’s implementation. In the medium-term, a Gender Specialist will be appointed to lead more substantive work at the programming level. The Gender Team will report to the Leadership Team and will coordinate the implementation of the Policy across key units and support capacity-building for the Commission’s staff.

Principle 6 – Competencies: The Commission commits to expand its core competencies in gender analysis and gender-responsive programming, seek strategic partnerships with regional and international organisations and strengthen capacities in MS to meet their broader commitments to GEWE, as expressed in this policy. More specifically, it will strengthen competencies in the areas of gender and environment, gender and mobility and gender and macroeconomics and work in line with regional priorities and emerging areas of concern.

Principle 7 – Capacity-building and opportunities: Gender training will be provided to all relevant staff members, including members of the Gender Team (see section II), management staff and staff of the Programme Unit, to build the OECS’s capacity in this area. The OECS is expected to complement its own staff’s capacity with consultants and targeted support from selected partners and recruit additional gender-qualified staff when activities increase, and additional support is needed. The gender focal point will support the implementation of the Policy in general and its follow-up and coordinate with the Gender Team on gender training initiatives for all relevant staff, among others (see section II for more details). The Leadership Team will play a key role in ensuring the observation of this principle.

Principle 8 – Resource allocation: The Commission will include an annual allocation in its budget specifically for gender mainstreaming and capacity-building. Wherever possible, it will also strive to ensure that resources are allocated to projects and programmes that contribute to GEWE and that its infrastructure projects (including third party initiatives) address inequalities and provide gender-responsive solutions.



Principle 9 – Partnership: Gender equality can only be achieved if women and men work together and if the use of safeguards enables to address social, environmental and economic risks. In this context, safeguards should also ensure the wellbeing of children and adolescents including from exploitation, abuse and abuse of power.

Principle 10 – Participation: Participation of women and men both as agents and beneficiaries in programmes and projects will be ensured, while being cognizant that in certain circumstances, the methods used to engage women must be different from those employed for men. The Commission will endeavour to ensure that women and men have equal opportunities to participate in stakeholder consultations and decision-making during the preparation, implementation and evaluation of projects and programmes. In relation to stakeholder participation, the following considerations will be made:

- a) The Commission will generate mechanisms for holding just and fair consultations and feeding the results of the consultations into the decision-making process;
- b) The Commission will encourage its clients and support their efforts to engage with stakeholders in ways that ensure that women and men have equal opportunities to express themselves; and
- c) The Commission will ensure that the implementation method used for pilot projects includes consultations with stakeholders at all stages of the project.

6. Developmental framework

a. International standards

“The OECS recognises that ending poverty and creating a brighter future for all must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth, and which address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection. The Organisation works to achieve these outcomes through close consultation and collaboration with our development partners and a diverse cross-section of regional and global stakeholders under a unified development framework”. In this regard, the OECS has committed to the 2030 Agenda, its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and numerous other targets.

Additionally, OECS Member States have signed on to or ratified several key international agreements and normative frameworks, including:

- *The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW, UN, 1979) Ratified by all OECS MS, CEDAW was the first international instrument to include all women's human rights, explicitly or implicitly, by prohibiting all forms of discrimination based on sex;
- *The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women* (Belem do Pará, Organization of American States, 1994), which protects a series of rights such as the right to recognition, enjoyment and protection of human rights and freedoms or the right to a life free of violence. It also defines the duties of the state and the specific measures that must be adopted to prevent violence against women;



- *The Beijing Platform for Action* (UN, 1995), which revisited the issue of violence against women and urged governments to take measures, including legislative reforms, to prevent and eradicate violence against women and assist women affected by this phenomenon;
- *The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC, 1994), particularly the UNFCCC’s Lima Work Programme on Gender (decision 18/CP.20); decisions 36/CP.7, 1/CP.16, 23/CP.1, 1/CP.21 (the Paris Agreement), 21/CP.22 and over 50 other decisions or mandates related to gender, women or socially responsible policy.
- *The Samoa Pathway of Action for Small Island Developing States, 2014*, speaks to accelerated modalities for action in various priority areas including gender equality and women’s empowerment. Speaking to gender equality at least eight times in the document, it commits SIDS to reaffirming and protecting human rights and gender rights. In para 27 (h) it encourages SIDS in “*Promoting and enhancing gender equality and women’s equal participation, including in policies and programmes in the public and private sectors in Small Island Developing States*”; and in paragraphs 76 and 77, it recognizes that the full realization of rights for women and girls has a transformative and multiplier effect on sustainable development and calls for equal rights for women and men to natural resources amongst other assets.

b. Regional, sub-regional and national legislation and/or policies

Gender equality is reflected in several key OECS policy instruments and normative frameworks, notably the Revised Treaty of Basseterre (articles 12 and 23, which address social development issues) and the Protocol of the OECS Economic Union. In the latter, articles 22.2, 22.3, 22.5 and 23.1 reflect a broad commitment to equality, even though they are largely focussed on the issues of education and social development.

Consistent with the obligations under various international conventions on the rights of women and gender equality, the OECS’ commitments to gender equality are also supported by the OECS Development Strategy, OECS Development Charter of 2002 and the analysis carried out for the elaboration of the OECS Human Development Report 2002.

The OECS Development Charter notes that “We are aware that our societies are substantially devoid of legal structures of discrimination based on gender. However, we do recognise that attention must be paid continuously to ensure effective and full incorporation of women as well as men in our social relations, and productive activities. We will pursue the implementation of policies and strategies that will, among other things: (a) Promote gender equality in accessing employment, education, access to public goods and health care services; and (b) Strengthen the capacity of institutions involved in promoting sound gender relations.”

Across OECS MS, there are a variety of policies and legislation addressing gender including a suite related specifically to Gender-based Violence and sexual violence. While the coverage and the depth are notable across MS, there are clear gaps. One such gap is on legislation against sexual harassment. A review of the 2019 Doing Business Report also highlights some gaps faced by persons establishing or trying to grow their business. One recent policy that



comprehensively details actions on gender equality and women's empowerment is the Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP) of the Government of Grenada (2014-2024). Another notable example is the Antigua and Barbuda Strategic Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence (2011-2015). Not all countries have a specific policy on gender and even when such policies exist, they are not always well-integrated into other issues. Thus, they do not effectively address how other issues influence gender relations and gendered roles and responsibilities and how gender influences other sectors and the dynamics therein. The need for more intersectional analysis and planning is clearly reflected in several discourses across the OECS Commission and Member States.

These normative frameworks and trends are supportive and enable a revised Gender Policy that creates catalysts for its adoption and its implementation. The gaps evidenced also provide an opportunity for this Policy to connect the dots and bridge the interest in gender mainstreaming with guidance on how to do it more effectively.

c. Strategic priorities

This OECS Gender Policy elaborates clearly the current and forward-thinking commitments of the Commission on gender and development for the next five years and the process and mechanisms through which gender analysis and planning will be undertaken and integrated consistently and in a coherent manner in the work of the OECS Commission. In keeping with the 2013 Gender Equality Mainstreaming Policy and Action Plan, this updated Gender Policy is also applicable at all levels of the Commission's programming and supports the development goals of all people in the sub-region.

This Policy empowers the Commission to apply principles of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls to the management of its programmes, budgets and procurement activities including relations with contractors, as well as its external relations, daily operations and staff.

This commitment is critical to the achievement of the Commission's strategic priorities, which are:

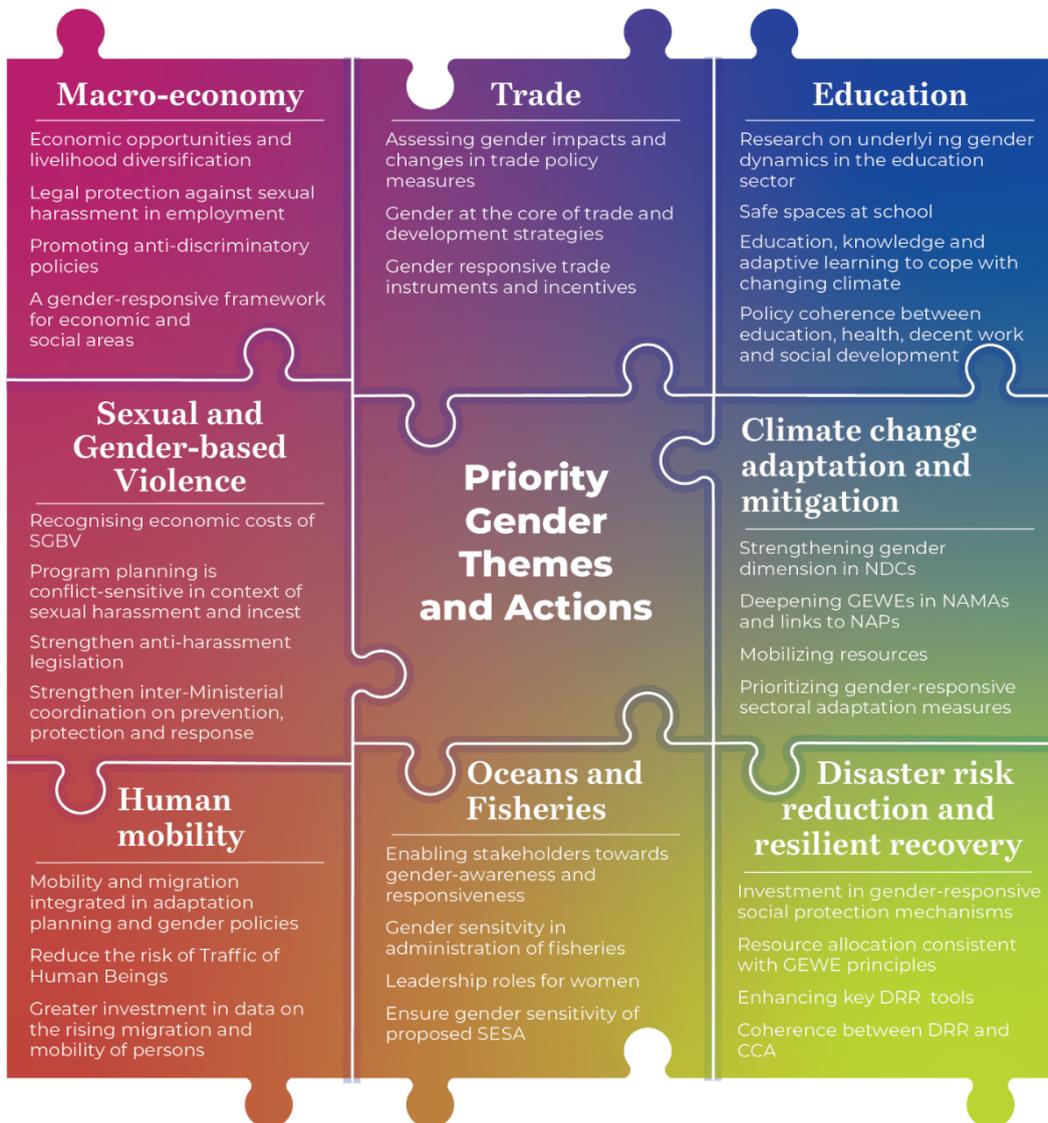
1. Accelerating Regional Integration
2. Reinventing the Economy
3. Valuing the Environment
4. Building Resilience
5. Advancing Equity and Inclusion

This Policy identifies areas of priority for working on gender in the OECS context and in mainstreaming GEWE into the design of policies, programme interventions and related communications. According to OECS Commission staff, these are areas where greater cooperation is likely to continue and be deepened at the sub-regional and/or multi-country level.

Moreover, commitments of OECS MS themselves to global normative and policy frameworks which directly or indirectly influence gender equality also make these commitments and the details of them relevant to the type of support the Commission will provide to MS.



Priority themes and areas for gender mainstreaming



7. Accountability and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

The Gender Team commits to reporting annually to the Director General of the Commission and Leadership Team on the implementation and results of the Gender Policy.

At the end of the period of five years, an evaluation of the Policy will be undertaken by an independently contracted consultant or party, with the full cooperation of senior management and staff and the involvement of the Council of Ministers. Thereafter and based on the findings, lessons learnt, successes, failures and recommendations, the Gender Policy will be updated.



The every-day work of various units of the OECS Commission ensures that the 10 Core Principles are followed and are applied. An indicative listing is as follows:

<u>Principle</u>	<u>OECS Commission Unit</u>
1. Commitment	All, particularly the office of the Director General
2. No discrimination, sexual harassment and gender-based violence in the workplace	All, particularly the Human Resources Unit and the Legal Unit
3. Comprehensiveness in coverage and scope	M&E under the Programme Management Unit (PMU), Internal Audit
4. Accountability	Office of the Director General, Internal Audit
5. Quality Management	Gender Team, Programme Management Unit (PMU)
6. Competencies	HR, Cluster Heads
7. Capacity building and Opportunities	Leadership Team
8. Resource Allocation	Leadership Team, Office of the Director General
9. Partnership	All, Gender Team
10. Participation	All Staff

As a living document, the Commission’s Gender Policy can be supplemented by additional protocols, manuals or appendices to reflect critical reflections arising from scheduled evaluations as well as from extreme events, economic crisis and/or social and socio-political turmoil.

In determining the progress that the Commission is making over the first years of the life of this policy, a gender marker for the Commission is proposed. This Marker would be used for each project and initiative to determine its level of ambition and impact and semi-annually the Commission will review new projects approved to see the extent to which they are meeting the minimum goal of “gender-responsiveness”.



Gender Marker Scoring for the OECS Commission



■ Gender blind ■ Gender aware ■ Gender sensitive ■ Gender responsive ■ Gender transformative

The Marker gives a score ranging from 0-4 for projects/actions and initiatives based on the level of commitment to gender-mainstreaming. Ideally, the Commission should be seeking an average score of 3 annually for all projects.

[0] Gender blind:

Projects/programmes/activities do not identify or acknowledge the existing differences and inequalities between women and men.

[1] Gender-aware:

Gender is part of the rationale but does not shape the design and approach of projects/programmes/activities.

[2] Gender sensitive:

Projects/programmes/activities identify and acknowledge the existing differences and inequalities between women and men;

[3] Gender responsive:

Projects/programmes/activities identify and acknowledge the existing differences and inequalities between women and men AND articulates actions, steps, policies and initiatives which address the different needs, aspirations, capacities and contributions of women and men.

[4] Gender-transformative:

beyond acknowledging differences and responding to them, projects/programmes/activities seek to address fundamental inequalities and imbalances.

The Marker is an important tool allowing the OECS to meet both institutional and developmental mainstreaming commitments and to allow for Monitoring and Evaluation and accountability that goes beyond the project level. When the Gender Policy is reviewed, as proposed every 5 years, a Gender Assessment of the OECS Commission's ability to meet its commitments is expected based on the above scoring approach.



Ideally, the Gender Focal Point would be the custodian of the marker, using it in the review of all new projects and initiatives and working with the M&E team to assess annually the performance of the Commission against the marker as part of the input to the Annual Report on performance under the Gender Policy.

Implemented well, this Gender Policy is expected, in the medium to long-term, to result in:

- Greater institutional capacity of the OECS Commission for gender-responsive and gender-transformative development;
- More robust accountability frameworks for GEWE in the Commission including clear roles and responsibilities for GEWE internally and externally;
- Enhanced visibility of GEWE in normative and programming documents, in communications, speeches and overall in the development practice of the Commission and by extension, its Member States;
- A working and operational environment and internal and external relationships which are more gender-sensitive;
- Expansive partnership with national machineries, technical actors as well as specialized institutions on GEWE in support of a more gender-responsive Economic Union; and
- Stronger technical partnerships and engagement with GE national machineries and coordination between them and other Ministries in the OECS Economic Union.

At the level of society, by virtue of greater investment and greater attention to GEWE, it is expected that there would be a measurable improvement in the lives of women, men, girls and boys particularly in exercising all their economic, social, environmental, cultural and political rights.

Linked to a Gender Marker, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the OECS Commission Gender Policy include:

- The degree of gender mainstreaming achieved annually (i.e.: the level of gender-responsiveness overall);
- % of improvement of staff capacity in knowledge and attitudes;
- % of staff with a professional certification in GE/GEWE;
- Degree of consistency of application of approved and available gender analysis and gender mainstreaming tools (as a representation of a total, as a number or a percentage);
- % of OECS Commission resources that support SDG 5 – Gender Equality annually; and
- Existence of specialized gender expertise in the Commission (e.g.: in the form of a Gender Specialist).

The Monitoring and Evaluation Approach for the Policy is informed by the expected outcomes and KPIs outlined above and applied through an annual reporting requirement for the Gender Policy. This consists of a review of compliance (as confirmed by the Internal



Auditor) and will be done in collaboration with the Human Resources Department and the respective units' reporting on their gender mainstreaming efforts and related results.

To support annual reporting, responsibilities for specific indicators will be assigned to various teams and the ongoing monitoring activities that will furnish relevant data is expected to be clearly defined in department work plans. The proposed Monitoring Approach is critical to the accountability mechanism of the Gender Policy. The Monitoring and Evaluation Approach will be led/coordinated by the Programme Management.

8. Implementation

The Policy will be implemented incrementally from November 2021.

It will be supported by a Gender Action Plan.

All employees will be required to attend mandatory initial training sessions on gender and new employees will be trained as part of the induction process.

For inquiries, guidance, or information on the Gender Policy, the Gender Specialist may be contacted through the Programme Management Unit at: pmu@oecs.int

9. Signature

Name: Dr. Didacus Jules

Signature:

Date:

