

Swedish Foreign Service action plan
for feminist foreign policy 2015–2018
including focus areas for 2016



Summary

More people are living better lives than ever before. But gender equality is still a vision, not a reality.

Sweden's feminist government wants to make this vision a reality. Gender equality is a goal in itself. But it is also essential for the achievement of the Government's other overall objectives, such as peace, security and sustainable development.

This is why gender equality and human rights efforts must continue unabated.

But we must also go one step further.

And we are doing this by making Sweden the first country in the world to pursue a feminist foreign policy.

Twenty years after the World Conference on Women in Beijing, the commitments are far from being fulfilled. Countless women and girls still experience a blatant lack of rights, representation and resources.

Sweden's feminist foreign policy will help to achieve concrete results that enhance both gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls.

This will be done by implementing systematic gender mainstreaming, based on knowledge and analysis, throughout the foreign policy agenda, not least in peace and security efforts.

This action plan sets the direction of feminist foreign policy action to be taken by the Foreign Service, guided by six long-term objectives. These are broad objectives to match broad challenges, cover the entire global agenda and bring the whole gamut of foreign policy tools into play. This will enable the Foreign Service to promote the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls, including by combating all forms of violence and discrimination that restrict their freedom of action.

The action plan specifies approaches, starting points, tools and actors. It also notes the importance of involving men and boys in the process of advancing gender equality.

Focus areas will support progress towards the long-term objectives. In 2016 these will include strengthening the human rights of women and girls in humanitarian settings and combating gender-based and sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. The potential of women and girls as actors will also be highlighted within the framework of peace processes, peace support operations and sustainable development efforts. The Foreign Service will continue to be a driving force for women's sexual and reproductive health and rights and in 2016 devote special attention to the rights of girls and young people.

The action plan will be incorporated into the Foreign Service operational plan. In this way we will facilitate the implementation and ensure results in foreign, security, development, trade and promotion policy, as well as in the achievement of the new global development goals.

Like the rest of the operational plan, the action plan will be monitored and updated every year. This will enable us to learn from experience and benefit from consultations and new data.

By applying this deeper, broader and more systematic approach, the feminist foreign policy will develop to achieve results that strengthen the rights, representation and resources of all women and girls.

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Foreword

Sweden's feminist government aims to ensure that women and men have the same power to shape society and their own lives. This is a goal in itself. But it is also essential for the achievement of the Government's other overall objectives, which in foreign policy are peace, security and sustainable development.

Around the world, gender equality has improved. The proportion of women in parliaments is increasing. More girls go to school. And yet the commitments made at the World Conference on Women in 1995 are far from being fulfilled. Violence, oppression and systematic subordination still mark the daily lives of countless women and girls.

Sweden wants this discrimination to end.

We are going about this by being a leading advocate for gender equality and human rights.

And by making Sweden the first country in the world to pursue a feminist foreign policy.

Our feminist foreign policy takes us one step further. Throughout our foreign policy, including in peace and security efforts, we will apply a systematic gender perspective. In so doing, we can contribute to real progress. And in so doing, we will become the strongest global voice for gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls.

A cornerstone in our efforts is knowledge. We therefore need to collect accurate data and conduct analyses that shed light on gender equality and power. These analyses will be intersectional to take into account that women and girls are not homogeneous groups – their identities, participation and living conditions differ.

This action plan sets out the direction of our feminist foreign policy agenda. Objectives and focus areas specify **what** we will do. But we also provide instructions on **how** we will work, including how to enhance the visibility of women as actors and push for women's rights and opportunities to organise.

The action plan will become part of the Foreign Service operational plan. In this way we will facilitate the implementation and achievement of results in foreign, security, development, and trade and promotion policy.

Like the rest of the operational plan, the action plan will be monitored and updated on an annual basis. This will enable us to learn from experience and benefit from consultations with a range of actors.

By applying this deeper, broader and more systematic approach, we intend to develop our feminist foreign policy and achieve results that strengthen the rights, resources and representation of women and girls.



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1. Objectives for 2015–2018 and focus areas for 2016

The objectives below set out the direction of Sweden's feminist foreign policy for 2015–2018. These are broad objectives to match broad challenges and enable us to work holistically, using coordinated foreign policy instruments. Action can therefore be taken in line with our Policy for Global Development, the 2030 Agenda and other national and international commitments.

Action to achieve these objectives should be aligned with the starting points in section 2 and taken with the help of actors and instruments reflected in sections 3 and 4. But the focus areas too will enable the Foreign Service to deepen efforts to respond to a particular challenge. In 2016 the Foreign Service will place particular emphasis on the areas listed as Focus 2016 under each objective and presented in points 1.1–1.6.

The Foreign Service will contribute to all women's and girls' :

1. Full enjoyment of human rights

Focus 2016: Strengthen the human rights of women and girls in humanitarian settings

2. Freedom from physical, psychological and sexual violence

Focus 2016: Combat gender-based and sexual violence against women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations and impunity for such crimes

3. Participation in preventing and resolving conflicts, and post-conflict peacebuilding

Focus 2016: Promote the participation of women as actors in peace processes and peace support operations

4. Political participation and influence in all areas of society

Focus 2016: Promote the participation of women and girls as actors for economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development

5. Economic rights and empowerment

Focus 2016: Strengthen the economic empowerment of women and girls and their access to economic resources, including through productive employment and decent work

6. Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

Focus 2016: Strengthen the sexual and reproductive rights of girls and young people

Focus areas for 2016

The following is a selection of the indicative measures envisaged to contribute to each focus area:

1.1 Strengthen the human rights of women and girls in humanitarian settings

- The Foreign Service will continue to strengthen the gender perspective in international humanitarian law and humanitarian aid. This will be achieved by contributing to training **in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross**, and working to ensure that relevant actors provide sexual and reproductive health services in humanitarian settings.
- The Foreign Service will actively lead the **Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies** to combat gender-based violence in humanitarian crises. Furthermore, the Foreign Service will ensure that the rights of women and girls are taken into account in both prevention and response to violence.
- **Within the framework of the Human Rights Council, the Foreign Service will defend the full enjoyment of human rights by women and girls who flee**, including by helping to enhance participation and empowerment opportunities for these women and girls.
- The Foreign Service will push the EU's work forward. This will be achieved by **collaborating with the EU Special Representative (EUSR) for Human Rights** and by being a driving force in the implementation of the EU Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through EU external relations and the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy.
- At the **World Humanitarian Summit** in May 2016, the Foreign Service will push for concrete measures to strengthen women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights in humanitarian settings.
- Using its **regional and bilateral instruments**, the Foreign Service will contribute to the above measures wherever possible, and to other initiatives that strengthen women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights in humanitarian settings.

1.2 Combat gender-based and sexual violence against women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations and impunity for such crimes

- **In the United Nations, the EU and other multilateral forums**, the Foreign Service will **push for effective action** in relation to the focus area. This will be done, for example, by emphasising the importance of promoting the human rights of all women and girls and highlighting these as central to the prevention of violence against women and girls in both peace and conflict situations. The Foreign Service will also highlight the link between conflict and increased gender-based domestic violence and promote the involvement of men and boys in prevention work.

- The Foreign Service will **collaborate with the UN's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict**, the EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender and UNSC Resolution 1325, UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, UN Women, UNFPA, OHCHR and other actors.
- The Foreign Service will also collaborate with the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** and its Chief Prosecutor to combat impunity for sexual and gender-based violence. Particular focus should be placed on strengthening the right of victims to redress and compensation, and on promoting legal and psychosocial support and protection for victims and witnesses alike.
- The Foreign Service will push the EU's work forward. This will be achieved within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and by being a driving force in the **comprehensive approach to the EU** implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, the EU Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through EU external relations, the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy and the EU guide for ending sexual violence in conflict.
- The Foreign Service will actively highlight the link between the spread of weapons and sexual violence and assist in the implementation of the States Parties' obligations under the **Arms Trade Treaty**.
- The Foreign Service will **combat gender-based and sexual violence perpetrated by terrorist groups** by pursuing these issues in international counter-terrorism forums such as the EU and the UN (including the Security Council) but also by supporting both international and national/local actors, including civil society organisations working to counter violent extremism, radicalisation, recruitment and destructive masculinity.
- The Foreign Service will ensure that the rule of law and human rights are respected in **international counter-terrorism efforts**.
- The Foreign Service will also contribute to the global implementation of the entire **2030 Agenda**, including the goals and targets that have a direct bearing on this focus area. These include Target 5.2 (eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls) and Target 16.2 (end all forms of violence against children).
- The Foreign Service will actively pursue efforts to combat gender-based and sexual violence in armed conflicts at **country and regional level**, including as part of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and subsequent resolutions.
- The Foreign Service will work to prevent gender-based and sexual violence by identifying and addressing the root causes and highlighting **gender-based violence** as a weapon of conflict and social and territorial control. The Foreign Service will involve men and boys in efforts to combat destructive masculinity.

- In accordance with the principle of complementarity, the Foreign Service will continue to cooperate with other states. The aim will be to **strengthen national capacities to investigate and prosecute sexual and gender-based violence** that may constitute crimes against the Statute of the International Criminal Court.
- The Foreign Service will **support initiatives for transitional justice that incorporate a gender perspective**. These initiatives may include domestic prosecution of war crimes, institutional reform, truth commissions, etc.

1.3 Promote the participation of women as actors in peace processes and peace support operations

- The Foreign Service will actively promote the **implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security**, and subsequent resolutions.
- The Foreign Service will promote a **gender perspective in all aspects of EU, UN, NATO and OSCE peace support operations** and an increased proportion of women in peace support operations, especially in leadership positions. The Foreign Service will also promote a clear gender perspective in the **studies** of conflicts to which UN, EU, NATO and OSCE peace operations are deployed. In special cases a separate gender analysis should also be conducted.
- Sweden will work to ensure the integration of a gender perspective in discussions, outcome documents and relevant **disarmament and arms control resolutions**, particularly in relation to the final document of the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS6) to be held in 2016 within the framework of the UN programme of action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.
- The Foreign Service will **push the EU's work forward**. This will be done, for example, within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Part of this will involve strengthening the gender perspective in EU crisis management operations in line with the non-paper 'Gender, Peace and Security in CSDP'.
- The Foreign Service will also contribute to the global implementation of the entire **2030 Agenda**, including the goals and targets that have a direct bearing on the focus area. These include Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies).
- The Foreign Service will **promote the participation of women as actors in peace processes in countries in conflict**, including by supporting women leaders, women's rights activists and relevant civil society organisations.
- In late 2015 Sweden will **host a high-level meeting on women's participation in mediation and peace processes**.

- In a process bringing together actors in Sweden and in conflict and post-conflict countries, the Foreign Service will develop a **new national action plan** for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The plan will be adopted in 2016.
- The Foreign Service and the Folke Bernadotte Academy will launch an **initiative to develop a network of Swedish women mediators** that will also enjoy Nordic and global support.

1.4 Promote the participation of women and girls as actors for economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development

- In multilateral forums as well as in and through the EU, the Foreign Service will actively promote the **participation of women and girls in the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda**.
- The Foreign Service will work actively to ensure that women's ability and expertise as **agents of change in low-carbon development and climate change adaptation** are harnessed, and that consideration is given to their particular vulnerability to climate change impacts.
- The Foreign Service will **pursue these efforts in the EU**, including by promoting the effective implementation of the EU Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through EU external relations.
- The Foreign Service will push for the political participation of women in the **International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding**.
- The Foreign Service will work actively to **increase the agency of women and girls**, including by promoting their rights and opportunities to form civil society organisations, enhancing their visibility as actors and providing forums where they can make their voices heard.
- The Foreign Service will act to enable more women **to access political office**.

1.5 Strengthen the economic empowerment of women and girls and their access to economic resources, including through productive employment and decent work

- The Foreign Service will act to ensure that measures contributing to the **positive impact of trade on women's economic empowerment will be identified, analysed and sought**. As part of these efforts, the Foreign Service will push for a gender mainstreaming requirement for sustainability assessments in connection with multilateral trade agreement negotiations and thereby the inclusion of impact assessments of these agreements in relation to women and girls.

- The Foreign Service will **promote the economic empowerment of women both in and through the EU**. This will be done, for example, as part of efforts to strengthen the European single market and in the context of EU external action, including the EU's negotiations on free trade agreements with third countries. This will also be done through development cooperation (the Development Cooperation Instrument and the European Development Fund), and through the EU Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through EU external relations.
- The Foreign Service will actively **monitor to ensure systematic gender mainstreaming by the multilateral development banks** in all areas of their work. They should also promote women's economic agency and access to resources, focusing in particular on investments and advisory services in the partner countries.
- The Foreign Service will work to ensure that women's **land ownership rights** are strengthened, including through the work of the UN.
- The Foreign Service will work to ensure that budget allocations take into account the rights and needs of women and girls, for example through **gender-responsive budgeting**.
- The Foreign Service will support access to **quality lifelong learning** for women and girls.
- The Foreign Service will **support women's access to productive and inclusive work**, and to productive and economic resources.
- The Foreign Service will promote **a gender-equitable division of unpaid housework and care work**.
- The Foreign Service will continue to seek **agreements that strengthen women's rights as workers**, along the lines of the cooperation agreement between Sweden, Bangladesh and the ILO.
- The Foreign Service will also contribute to the global implementation of the entire **2030 Agenda**, including the goals and targets that have a direct bearing on this focus area. This includes Target 1.4 (on equal rights to economic resources, natural resources, ownership, inheritance, etc. for all men and women), Target 8.5 (on productive employment and decent work for all women and men), Target 5.4 (on shared responsibility for unpaid domestic and household work), Target 10.2 (on promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, without discrimination) and Goal 4 (on education).
- The Foreign Service will work to ensure that gender equality and women's rights and empowerment are protected and strengthened through **corporate social responsibility (CSR)**.
- Foreign Service **activities related to project exports** will strive for positive effects for women and girls.

- The Foreign Service will **strengthen women’s business networks** by increasing contact with them and enhancing their visibility as actors promoting women’s economic empowerment and participation. This kind of activity could usefully be conducted as a Team Sweden activity.
- The Foreign Service will continue its efforts to **support women entrepreneurs** and conduct promotion activities with a special focus on the participation of women in working life.

1.6 Strengthen the sexual and reproductive rights of girls and young people

- The Foreign Service will **continue to pursue ‘contentious’ issues**, focusing in 2016 on strengthening the normative framework for girls and young people.
- The Foreign Service will **work for the fulfilment of international commitments** and strengthen accountability mechanisms regarding sexual and reproductive rights, based on the UN Conference on Women in Beijing and the Population Conference in Cairo and follow-up conferences and commissions, as well as the 2030 Agenda and its goals, targets and indicators.
- In 2016 the Foreign Service will launch a special initiative to **strengthen cooperation between like-minded states** in different regions with a strategic view to strengthening the global normative agenda on sexual and reproductive rights.
- Through **active dialogue and board responsibilities** in the UN system and other international forums, the Foreign Service will promote the fulfilment of the sexual and reproductive rights relevant to the respective agencies. This applies in particular to UNFPA, UNAIDS, OHCHR, WHO, UNICEF, UN Women and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.
- The Foreign Service will **push EU efforts** by working for a stronger EU position and consensus on these issues, and by pushing for the effective implementation of the EU Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment through EU external relations.
- The Foreign Service will also contribute to the global implementation of the entire **2030 Agenda**, including the goals and targets that have a direct bearing on this focus area, such as Target 3.7 (on SRH) and Target 5.6 (on SRHR).
- The Foreign Service will **counteract norms and attitudes that obstruct** girls’ and young people’s access to sexual and reproductive rights. Men and boys may usefully be included in these efforts.
- **In bilateral dialogue** the Foreign Service will specifically act to strengthen girls’ and young people’s sexual and reproductive rights and, to this end, provide **platforms for dialogue** and **strategic experience exchanges** between relevant actors.

- The Foreign Service will **promote reproductive rights** by promoting long-term prevention of unwanted teenage pregnancies, increased access to comprehensive sexuality education, contraceptives and counselling also to unmarried and young people, and legal and safe abortions.
- The Foreign Service will **scale up action for sexual rights without discrimination, abuse and violence**, including by focusing on forced, early and child marriage, sexual harassment in schools and LGBTQ rights.

2. Starting points and approach

2.1 General overview

Sweden's feminist foreign policy is based on international law and international and EU agreements, some of which are listed below. It is also based on national policy objectives and on a Foreign Service approach.

Existing instructions and policy documents that align with this will continue to be used.

2.2 International and EU starting points

- The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent human rights instruments including:
 - the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
 - the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
 - the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women,
 - the Convention on the Rights of the Child,
 - the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime.
- Declarations and action plans of the UN Conference on Women in Beijing and the Population Conference in Cairo and follow-up conferences.
- UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and subsequent resolutions.
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the agreements made at the Conferences on Financing for Development.
- The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Istanbul Convention on combating violence against women.
- The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.
- The Treaty on European Union, the EU Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through EU external relations 2016–2020, the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015–2019, the Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, the European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010–2015 and its successor, and relevant guidelines, Council conclusions, and other documents.

2.3 National starting points

Feminist foreign policy also forms part of the Government's gender equality work and thereby contributes to the achievement of the overall gender equality policy objective: "Women and men must have the same power to shape society and their own lives." Based on this overall objective, the Government's work is guided by four underlying objectives:

- an even distribution of power and influence,
- economic equality,
- an even division of unpaid housework and care work, and
- an end to men's violence against women.

Other national starting points are Sweden's Policy for Global Development and the national action plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

2.4 Approach and core of Sweden's feminist foreign policy

Sweden's feminist foreign policy is also an approach, which requires that the activities of the Foreign Service incorporate a gender equality perspective that can be summarised under three 'Rs':

- **Rights:**
The Foreign Service will promote the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls, including by combating all forms of violence and discrimination that restrict their freedom of action.
- **Representation:**
The Foreign Service will promote women's participation and influence in decision-making at all levels and in all areas, and seek dialogue with women representatives at all levels, including in civil society.
- **Resources:**
The Foreign Service will work to ensure that resources are allocated to promote gender equality and equal opportunities for all women and girls to enjoy human rights. The Foreign Service will also promote targeted measures for different target groups.

A fourth 'R' is to ensure that action is always based on reality checks and analysis, as further explained in section 4.

3. Actors

3.1 General overview

The action plan for Sweden's feminist foreign policy is to be implemented by the entire Foreign Service.

The Foreign Service will promote broad partnerships and alliances in the implementation of the action plan and international gender equality commitments.

The Foreign Service will include men and boys in the change process to advance gender equality. This is crucial to bring about real and sustainable change required to achieve both gender equality and new power relations. Opportunities for people to achieve their full potential and contribute to positive social development are hindered by discriminatory gender norms.

3.2 Sweden

The policy and the action plan will be implemented in cooperation with the rest of the Government Offices.

Work will also be carried out in collaboration with government agencies. As part of this work, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will conduct a review of its agencies' policy documents (including instructions, appropriation directions, thematic/regional/bilateral strategies, and other policy documents) to ensure that management and monitoring are in line with Sweden's feminist foreign policy. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will also ensure that all new policy documents, including strategy proposals, are consistent with the new policy direction. In conjunction with the revision of development cooperation strategies, the need for a specific strategy for gender equality in development cooperation will be reviewed.

Moreover, this work will be pursued in dialogue with a wide range of other actors in Swedish society, including women's, youth and human rights organisations, religious communities, business, trade union organisations and universities.

3.3 The EU and the Nordic countries

The EU's common foreign policy is a key instrument for implementing Sweden's feminist foreign policy. The Foreign Service will continuously ensure that the EU's gender equality objectives inform the EU's work across the board. This will be achieved through cooperation with EU Member States at both national and capital city level, collaboration with EU institutions and delegations, and strategic advocacy and negotiation in Brussels. As part of this work, the Foreign Service will cooperate with the European Parliament and other EU institutions with particular responsibility for pursuing gender equality issues, such as the EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender and UNSC Resolution 1325, and other relevant functions, institutions and key actors.

Cooperation between the Nordic countries is another platform for actively pursuing a feminist foreign policy dialogue inside and outside the EU and the UN. At present, this applies not least to the area of disarmament and in the context of sexual and reproductive health and rights work.

3.4 Our neighbourhood, other groups of countries and globally

Implementation of Sweden's feminist foreign policy agenda will involve dialogue and cooperation with countries and groups of countries in our neighbourhood, regionally and globally. In this context Sweden will act using its own tools and through the EU.

In our neighbourhood, the Foreign Service will, for example, actively pursue gender equality issues within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, as well as in enlargement policy in relation to both current and potential candidate countries.

In the rest of the world, dialogue and collaboration will take place with associations of states and regions. These include the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the African Union (AU), the Organisation of American States (OAS) and the Arab League.

3.5 Multilateral and global actors

The feminist foreign policy agenda will be implemented through, and in cooperation with, multilateral organisations and actors of which Sweden is a member or partner, or where Sweden acts through the EU.

These organisations and actors include the UN and its funds, programmes and agencies, the World Bank, the regional development banks, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding.

Where possible and appropriate, the Foreign Service will also collaborate with other actors with global reach and the ability to strengthen gender equality efforts. These include private individuals as well as philanthropic organisations and international companies (including Swedish companies).

3.6 Bilateral actors

The feminist foreign policy agenda will be implemented in cooperation and dialogue with bilateral actors at national, regional and local level. The bilateral setting encompasses a plethora of actors, including representatives of governments, political parties, trade union organisations, industry, universities, civil society organisations and religious communities.

Each specific context will determine which actors are most important to interact with to achieve the feminist foreign policy objectives. In general, however, the Foreign Service will also increase contact with women's rights defenders, women elected representatives, trade unions, political movements and civil society organisations to enhance the visibility of women as political actors and support women's rights and opportunities to organise and exercise political power and influence.

The Foreign Service will also give more visibility to women and strengthen them as economic actors by increasing its contact with women entrepreneurs and women's business networks, and with legal actors working to strengthen women's economic rights.

4. Instruments and methods

4.1 General overview

Sweden's feminist foreign policy requires the Foreign Service to apply a systematic rights and gender equality perspective:

- in its ongoing operations, from analysis to monitoring and new analysis
- throughout the entire breadth of its operations, i.e. in foreign and security policy, and development, trade and promotion policy.

The Foreign Service will use its own existing and extensive knowledge and that of other Swedish government agencies to move its gender equality efforts forward. The same applies to existing knowledge and analysis in the multilateral organisations.

The Foreign Service will also be offered support in the form of online training. Further details are included in section 5.3.

4.2 Analysis and data collection

The Foreign Service will constantly consider how operations can help to increase gender equality and enhance the full enjoyment of human rights by women and girls. As part of this work, the Foreign Service will conduct gender analysis in its planning and ongoing operations, for example when formulating action, operational and promotion plans, and developing strategies for development cooperation, decisions on new initiatives and projects, and the management of new assignments. Gender analysis will also be mainstreamed into Foreign Service reporting and monitoring.

The analysis will take into account that women and girls, just like men and boys, are not homogeneous groups – their identities, needs, participation and living conditions differ. The analysis must therefore consider other factors besides sex, such as age, place of residence, socioeconomic status, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, level of education, belief and religion. To be complete, the analysis must also be accompanied by an assessment of the power relations that exist for different groups in the specific context.

The Foreign Service will collect and use sex disaggregated statistics and reporting, and seek to obtain this kind of data if it is not available from bilateral or multilateral actors or civil society organisations. In addition to collecting quantitative data, the Foreign Service will also take into account qualitative reporting from multilateral, bilateral and other sources (including the EU). Research on the importance of gender equality in foreign policy related areas is growing very fast. It is crucial to find ways of incorporating this research when implementing the plan.

In its analysis, the Foreign Service will include an assessment of how masculinity and femininity norms are constructed and change in the relevant context. The Foreign Service will then also include an assessment of the actors and groups that have the greatest potential to influence gender equality efforts in the specific context. The role of men and boys as change agents will also be taken into account.

The patterns that emerge in the analysis and data collection processes will be set against the feminist foreign policy objectives and used to develop the gender equality work.

4.3 Accountability efforts

The Foreign Service will actively demand accountability from the EU, bilateral, multilateral and international actors and institutions by working to ensure that they:

- have legislative and policy documents based on international law and international agreements, and consistently comply with them,
- apply an intersectional perspective to gender analysis and other work,
- produce sex-disaggregated statistics,
- enhance their expertise in the area of gender equality and the rights of women and girls,
- enhance their expertise and strengthen their prevention efforts to combat discriminatory rules, norms and stereotypes surrounding gender, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation,
- pursue active organisational and human resources policies that create non-discriminatory organisational structures and promote gender equality, including more women in leadership positions,
- allocate resources to promote gender equality and the rights of women, girls and LGBTQ people, including human resources and expertise for action on gender equality.

As part of this work, the Foreign Service will make active use of existing accountability mechanisms and work to ensure concrete progress for all women and girls.

The Foreign Service will cooperate with multilateral actors and use Sweden's board assignments, ownership, membership, partnerships and other instruments to promote normative and operational work for gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls. Foreign Service multi-agency strategies will be used to emphasise and monitor the actors' gender equality efforts, focusing on requirements for concrete results.

4.4 Agenda-setting, functions, delegations and visits

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will identify a number of meetings, conferences and side events every year where gender issues and change agents for gender equality can be highlighted. Missions abroad will do the same in their respective areas and contexts.

The Foreign Service will gender mainstream the activities that Sweden takes part in, organises or supports financially, both bilaterally and multilaterally. It will use this type of platform to enhance the visibility of, and thereby strengthen, women, girls and LGBTQ people as actors, and ensure the use of available expertise.

The Foreign Service will continuously review the composition of its visiting delegations and negotiating teams to ensure, as far as possible, that they are gender-mainstreamed.

It will also review its visit programmes so they will help to give visibility to women, girls and LGBTQ people as actors.

4.5 Alliance-building, platforms, groups of friends

The Foreign Service will build alliances and platforms for implementation of the international commitments on gender equality and the rights of all women and girls. Using these alliances and platforms, it will create a broad partnership for gender equality.

One such platform is the High-Level Group for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which over the next few years will give Sweden opportunities to pursue gender equality issues and the rights of all women and girls, including sexual and reproductive rights. 'A Global Deal' is another platform that can promote gender equality by promoting decent and productive employment for women. At bilateral level, networks and alliances can take many forms (EU constellations, CSO consultations, individual informal dialogue partners, lunch gatherings that can be used as an ongoing sounding board and convened in conjunction with visits, etc.).

4.6 Dialogue for influence and data collection

Gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls, including sexual and reproductive rights, will continually be addressed in dialogue with official representatives of states, the EU, multilateral organisations and other relevant actors. These issues will be central, integrated and mutually reinforcing elements of the dialogue, whether it is a matter of foreign, security, development, trade or promotion policy. Dialogue with political, military, religious and economic decision-makers, both women and men, is central.

Although progress has been significant, efforts to promote the rights of women, girls and LGBTQ people often meet with resistance and in certain contexts increasingly active resistance. The Foreign Service will respond to this resistance by standing up for Sweden's values and presenting strong practical arguments and sound analysis. At the same time, Sweden's feminist foreign policy will contribute to dialogue and be implemented to achieve the greatest possible impact. In some situations, discussing Swedish and international experiences, challenges and solutions may be a way forward. Another might be to highlight good practices of both countries and organisations. In addition to the rights perspective, yet another way could be to emphasise the efficiency and sustainability of investing in gender equality, increasing employment rates and strengthening the human capital of entire societies.

Dialogue with international, national and local women's and peace organisations, and with other human rights and civil society organisations, is essential to support them and make them visible. It is also essential to consider the problem analysis and proposals of these actors with a view to creating conditions for sustainable solutions.

4.7 Promotion and skills development

The Foreign Service will use its Sweden promotion activities to advance gender equality and the rights of women and girls, both as a separate agenda and when promoting the image of Sweden abroad. As part of this, the annual work on promotion plans will be used to map gender equality promotion by the missions abroad.

The Foreign Service and its missions should be able to provide targeted skills development, for example to ensure that potential change agents in leadership positions receive training on gender equality and women's and girls' rights.

4.8 Negotiations, monitoring mechanisms and reviews

The Foreign Service will use negotiations, review conferences and monitoring mechanisms to ensure that the rights and participation of women and girls are strengthened. This will apply to the work of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Commission on Population and Development (CPD), the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, negotiations in the Human Rights Council, and the EU's enlargement policy. The EU's internal gender equality work, the EU Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through EU external relations, and the Multiannual financial framework for 2014–2020 are also central.

In this context, regional agreements and reviews can play a key role in moving gender equality issues forward. The relevant regional agreements include the Maputo Protocol (the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa) and the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development.

In the EU, the Foreign Service will act consistently to ensure that the Council of the European Union adopts conclusions and other policy documents that strengthen the EU's gender equality work, both internally and in external policy. The EU's new Gender Action Plan will guide gender equality efforts in the EU's external policy.

4.9 Routines for grant management, meetings, reporting, etc.

The Foreign Service must ensure that its grant management processes comply with gender mainstreaming requirements. Greater emphasis should be given to gender equality in grant allocation decisions. A gender and power analysis will be included in the preparation phase and existing templates will be reviewed and adjusted for this purpose. The international development cooperation and security policy appropriations available to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will be used more strategically to promote gender equality and the rights of women and girls including SRHR, where Sweden has a special opportunity to support 'contentious' issues that few other countries support.

The Foreign Service will ensure that templates and procedures help to integrate a gender equality perspective. This will apply to templates for meeting documentation (background and message) and for government bills and written communications to the Riksdag.

In accordance with section 4.2, the Foreign Service will mainstream gender analysis into regular economic, trade, aid and security policy reporting.

The Foreign Service will also reinforce the emphasis on women's and girls' living conditions and rights, including SRHR, in its human rights reports.

4.10 Positions in international organisations, institutions and peace operations

The Foreign Service and its seconding agencies will use secondment programmes as an instrument for promoting gender equality. This will be done by actively nominating Swedish women to international positions and ensuring that the representatives and officials Sweden appoints and sends are equipped with gender knowledge and expertise. This will also be done by identifying strategic positions whose level or duties can help drive international gender equality work, and by nominating Swedish experts for these positions. The Foreign Service will also work to ensure that multilateral actors and international institutions pursue active organisational and human resources policies that create non-discriminatory organisational structures and promote gender equality, as well as more women in leadership positions.

5. Division of responsibilities, management and support for the work of the Foreign Service

5.1 Division of responsibilities and management

Managerial leadership and accountability are central to the impact of the feminist foreign policy agenda on our activities and to its implementation through this action plan. Responsibility lies with managers at both political and official level and includes everything from organising activities in accordance with the plan to creating opportunities for themselves and their staff to engage in the skills development, analysis and monitoring that are part of the action plan and policy development.

The action plan will be incorporated into the Foreign Service operational plan. Accordingly, the action plan and feminist foreign policy efforts, including budget allocations, will be integrated into the regular operational planning, management and monitoring, and the regular dialogue between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the missions abroad. In this dialogue, the Foreign Service should consider the many good proposals from both the missions abroad and the departments on how to move Sweden's feminist foreign policy forward in different contexts. The Foreign Service's human and other resources will be allocated in the light of the action plan.

Monitoring and analysis are central to the preparation of next year's action plan and to achieving tangible progress. The reason for an annual action plan is precisely to enable the Foreign Service to use its experiences, dialogues and data collection in the further development of this work. It also enables others to follow the work being done and provides for accountability and proposals from external parties.

An internal advisory group consisting of staff responsible for coordinating gender issues at each department will be formed to promote and monitor Sweden's feminist foreign policy, jointly and separately for the various objectives. The Gender Equality Ambassador will head the group. Managerial involvement and support for this group are crucial.

The Gender Equality Ambassador will also represent the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the inter-ministry working group on gender equality led by the Division for Gender Equality at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

5.2 Communications activities

The entire Foreign Service will include feminist foreign policy action in its internal and external communications. The Communications Department will provide support by developing targeted information materials in collaboration with the departments concerned.

The first stage will involve producing basic information and message input and making this available to all the missions abroad. These input documents should be regarded as living documents that can be developed, while the policy starting points and approach naturally remain in place. Ultimately, locally and regionally adapted messages should be developed in close consultation between the missions abroad and the Ministry's departments to enhance the visibility of women and girls and promote their

full enjoyment of human rights in the best possible way. Arguments and messages should be based on facts and knowledge and may, for example, point to both Swedish and international experiences and social solutions. A communication plan including more information will be made available to all missions abroad.

5.3 Guidance, skills development and internal exchange of experience

The Government Offices existing guidance for gender equality work will be used actively.

The Government's strategy for gender mainstreaming at the Government Offices (U2012/1388/JÄM) sets out how gender mainstreaming is to be conducted at the Government Offices in 2012–2015. Gender mainstreaming means that a gender perspective is to be incorporated into all decision-making, at all levels and at all stages of the process, by the actors normally involved in decision-making. The Minister for Gender Equality is responsible for coordinating the Government's gender equality policy and the Government's gender mainstreaming efforts in the Government Offices, assisting ministries in their development work and monitoring and evaluating results and impacts achieved.

Guidance is also available on how to facilitate effective dialogue on SRHR (Dialogue for Change: Material to support policy dialogue on SRHR) on the Government website regeringen.se. In 2015 additional information has been added.

In parallel to this, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will strengthen its dialogue with relevant agencies to both broaden its knowledge base and develop information materials, exhibitions, seminars and articles on gender equality within the scope of Sweden promotion activities and public diplomacy.

Gender equality and diversity are among the priorities of the new 2015–2018 skills plan. Staff will be offered online training to support them in implementing the feminist foreign policy agenda. Training and discussions on gender equality and rights for all women and girls will also be included in training programmes for managers and new staff (including the Diplomatic Training Programme), and in the annual meetings of Swedish Ambassadors, regional meetings and other forums. Managers in key positions will also receive support to mainstream gender into their operations through a Gender Coach Programme that will be conducted in 2016. In addition, a special initiative will be implemented to enhance the Foreign Service's LGBTQ skills.

Various opportunities will be offered for the internal exchange of experience on feminist foreign policy action.

Annex

Examples of Swedish feminist foreign policy efforts in 2014–2015

Foreign Service:

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the missions abroad have examined gender equality efforts in each mission's context. Our embassies in particular have proposed ways of pursuing and implementing our feminist foreign policy agenda in practice in different countries. To reinforce feminist foreign policy efforts, the Foreign Service has produced an internal action plan based on these proposals. At the same time we have launched skills development, communication, dialogue and promotion initiatives. For example, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has produced information material on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SHRH), supplementing earlier dialogue support in the area (2014–2015).

National level:

Ahead of a new national action plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, Sweden has held consultations with actors in Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and Palestine, as well as with Swedish stakeholders.

A gender perspective has been integrated into all new development cooperation strategies. The ordinance concerning Sida's duties has been amended. As of 2015, Sida's activities must be gender mainstreamed and include an analysis of the situation of women, girls, men and boys. In its appropriation directions, Sida has been instructed to present a gender mainstreaming plan for 2015–2018. Like Sida, the Folke Bernadotte Academy is gender mainstreaming its activities and has also been instructed to establish a Swedish women's mediation network (2015).

Nordic level:

Sweden has begun working with the other Nordic countries on a Nordic women's mediation network (2015).

EU level:

At the initiative of Sweden, the EEAS has created the function of a Principal Adviser on Gender and Security Council resolution 1325 (2015).

Sweden has actively contributed to the development of the EU's new gender equality action plan that includes the enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls. This plan means that gender equality will not only be part of development cooperation but also an integral part of all the EU's external action (2015).

Sweden has pushed for the EU to lead the work on combating men's violence against women and has also proposed and strengthened the wording on women's and girls' rights in a number of EU documents. Sweden has been a driving force, for example, for SRHR issues, including in connection with the preparation of the EU gender equality action plan mentioned above, as well as in Council conclusions such as 'Gender in Development' (2014–2015).

UN level:

A letter was sent to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon stating that the Security Council must raise the issue of gender-based and sexual violence in war and conflict (September 2015).

Sweden played a very active role, and often a decisive one, to secure a good outcome for the gender equality goal in the intergovernmental negotiations that led to the historic adoption of the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We combined strategic negotiating in the EU and the UN with close collaboration with women's and human rights organisations; this is an example of Sweden as a feminist foreign policy actor (2015).

Sweden, UN Women and the OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) have together developed an action plan for financing for gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment within the framework of the Financing for Development Agenda (2015).

Sweden played a leading part in pushing through a new gender equality policy for the World Food Programme (2015).

A number of Swedish embassies are arranging seminars and events or otherwise commemorating the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the landmark Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security (second half of 2015).

Transatlantic link:

A high-level seminar was jointly hosted with the US Embassy in Stockholm (March 2015).

Sweden is collaborating with the other Nordic embassies in Washington to highlight gender equality in the transatlantic dialogue (2014–2015).

Sweden is taking part in a US-initiated gender equality working group with a handful of other countries. This provides an opportunity to promote Swedish policy and coordinate with other countries that have an active gender equality policy (as of October 2015).

Global and multilateral level:

An international network of women foreign ministers has been formed (first meeting held in New York, September 2015).

Sweden was a driving force behind the gender equality strategy that the African Development Bank presented in 2014. We have also supported the development of the World Bank report on women's

voice and agency and demonstrated commitment to the development of the World Bank's new gender equality strategy, including by organising two consultations on the strategy in Stockholm (2014–2015). Over the last three years, Sweden has successfully advocated for a gender equality policy now in place in all the major environmental and climate funds that Sweden contributes to (the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility, and the World Bank's climate funds – the Climate Investment Funds and the Adaptation Fund). Sweden is also a driving force in the implementation and monitoring of these policy documents (2014-2015).

Along with Botswana, Sweden is responsible in the ICC Assembly of States Parties for facilitating experience exchange on strengthening national capacity to investigate and prosecute crimes under the ICC Statute (genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes). This work is conducted in cooperation with the Office of the ICC Prosecutor and focuses in particular on sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict (2014–2015).

Sweden held a seminar (Global Review of Aid for Trade) on the opportunities and barriers facing women traders in Africa and the role of aid for trade in reducing trade barriers (June 2015).

Bilateral level:

Seminars have been held in Guatemala and Uganda on strengthening national capacity to investigate and prosecute sexual and gender-based violence as serious international crimes. These seminars were held in cooperation with the Office of the ICC Prosecutor (2015).

A broad initiative has been taken in Colombia and Mali to support the participation of women in peace processes with the help of local and international stakeholders (2014–2015).

DJ courses for girls in Vietnam, Ukraine and Serbia have been held as a collaboration between the Swedish Institute, Equalisters (Rättviseförmedlingen) and the Swedish embassies in these countries (2015).

Masculinity and the importance of involving men and boys in gender equality work have been the themes of a series of activities organised by the Swedish Embassy in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2015).

Gender equality policy was the theme of seminars organised by a dozen or so missions abroad in conjunction with the 'Life Puzzle' photographic exhibition (2015).

Meetings with women have regularly been an integral part of international visits by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Among the many examples are the meetings held in Maidan Square during the visit to Kyiv (2014–2015).

Conferences:

International meeting on combating impunity for sexual and gender-based violence brought together ICC Chief Prosecutor and other experts, Stockholm (May 2014).

Seminar on sexual and reproductive health and rights in connection with the launch of the UNFPA flagship report 'State of World Population' (2014).

Seminar on the particular impact of nuclear weapons on women and girls, organised by Sweden in cooperation with Denmark, Ireland, Austria, Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago and held at the Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (May 2015).

Launch of the ICC Prosecutor's Policy on Sexual and Gender-Based Crimes in collaboration with the UK, in conjunction with the ICC Assembly of State Parties in New York (December 2014).

Sweden will host a high-level meeting on women in peace processes and mediation in Stockholm (December 2015).

Academic setting:

Visit and ministerial roundtable at the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, Washington DC (January 2015).

Speeches by the Minister for Foreign Affairs:

The Minister for Foreign Affairs has spoken about Sweden's feminist foreign policy in all her major speeches, including the Statement of Foreign Policy (February 2015) and the key policy speech at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (June 2015). Three major speeches have centred on Sweden's feminist foreign policy (on Femdefenders in November 2014, at the US Institute of Peace in January 2015, and at the University of Helsinki in March 2015).

Social media:

The Midwives4All campaign has been seen by 2.1 million people on Twitter (2014–2015).

The Prime Minister and the Swedish Government have given their support to UN Women's HeForShe campaign (2015).

Other media:

Sweden's feminist foreign policy has featured in the following newspapers and magazines:

- New Yorker
- Foreign Policy
- Foreign Affairs
- Financial Times
- Al Jazeera
- Washington Post
- The Independent
- USIP
- The Guardian