



## GENDER SECTOR SUMMARY



*Gender crosscuts all Danida's programmes in Kenya. Photo: Danida*

### ADDRESSING GENDER EQUALITY IN KENYA

In all programmes that Danida supports, gender analyses and gender rolling plans are well defined, including clear gender-related indicators aligned with a country's key policy instruments and strategy papers for sustainable development.

The Embassy of Denmark in Kenya is supporting programmes until 2016, in health, business, natural resource management and governance, all of which recognise and mainstream gender equality as an integral thematic component.

Experience clearly proves that social and economic growth greatly benefits from women's equal participation in key national reform agendas. In Kenya, 2010 presented both challenges and achievements in addressing gender equality. A notable achievement was the passing and promulgation of the new constitution, seen as a major step in the struggle for greater gender equality in Kenya.

### GENDER EQUALITY IN DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS REFORMS - FROM THEORY TO ACTION

Danida's Kenya Governance Support Programme (KGSP) provides financial support for the advancement and empowerment of women in Kenya, through the expansion of the democratic space in which women are represented. Together with other likeminded donors, Danida supports the Gender and Governance Programme (GGP) coordinated by UN Women. In addition, KGSP works with women's civil society organisations, such as the Federation of Women Lawyers Kenya (FIDA Kenya), which ensures that the constitutional right of gender equality is upheld. GGP has supported the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development and other strategic actors to develop the Affirmative Action Bill. The programme also supported a review of the 'gender bills', consolidating issues in line with new constitutional provisions, through the submission of a joint updated bill in Parliament.

## TAKING ADVANTAGE OF NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Kenya's Constitution (2010) has entrenched affirmative action in a number of its provisions that are intended to benefit different marginalized groups. With respect to gender representation in elective and appointive bodies, Article 81 (b) of the Constitution provides that "the electoral system shall comply with the following principle: not more than two-thirds of the members of elective public bodies shall be of the same gender." Several other articles in the Constitution augment this principle, emphasising its importance. The two-thirds gender ratio is also a requirement at the county level and is adequately provided for in the Constitution.

Whereas civic and voter education in Kenya, leaves much to be desired at this stage, the two-thirds principle has forced political parties to consider ways to better include women in the political arena and emphasise civic education for women. In preparation for the next general elections, Danida is supporting the UN Women programme on women's political leadership, raising awareness about new opportunities for elected positions and what it means to hold public office. The programme aims to establish a Women's Leadership Academy for female aspirants, to conduct training for political parties on gender mainstreaming, to ensure gender elements are included in the nationwide voter education campaigns and to create a 'Women Direct' platform for women-to-women engagement at constituency level.

With this in mind, GGP partnered with InfoTrack to conduct an opinion poll on women's representation. The results were announced on August 26th 2011 just as Parliament was debating options to amend sections of the Constitution pertaining to the two-thirds principle. The poll showed that 78% of the population are aware of the constitutional provision on the two-thirds principle and that 74% are in favour of this provision. Seventy five percent of Kenyans stated that they

would have no problem voting for a women candidate in the next election. In fact, the poll served to remind Parliamentarians of the wide support for the principle at a time when some were arguing for its elimination, saying that women would not be able to meet the quota in the 2012 elections.

## COMMITTED TO HEALTH SECTOR SUPPORT

For the past eight years Danida has provided support to Kenya's health sector. In June 2011, Danida made the largest commitment yet to this sector by embarking on the third phase of its Health Sector Programme Support (HSPS). HSPS III runs from 2012 to 2016 and focuses on three areas: providing financial and technical resources to the Health Sector Services Fund, ensuring the availability of essential medicines and medical supplies and supporting the provision of sexual and reproductive health and rights services to the most needy, especially poor women.



*The horticultural industry in Kenya employs many women. Photo: Danida*

## GENDER AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN KENYA

The National Private Sector Development Strategy (PSDS) states that the enterprise sector does not offer equal opportunities for men and women. Although there are no significant disparities in the number of women and men engaged in activities within the sector, women are predominantly found in the less productive segment of the informal sector. For reasons related to

their multiple roles as wives, mothers and bread-winners, women's mobility is constrained, forcing them to take part only in those enterprises that they can combine with other tasks, usually close to home.

Women-owned enterprises also suffer from a lack of access to capital, since most women entrepreneurs do not possess the collateral to guarantee a loan. Moreover, appropriate credit mechanisms have not yet been developed. On the whole, there is a need for enterprise-related information that is gender-disaggregated, which would influence policy formulation and programme design in favour of women entrepreneurs.

Against this background the second phase of the Danida Business Support Programme (BSPS II) in Kenya has ensured that the programme strengthens business women's participation in public-private dialogue processes at national and regional levels. In addition, it has strengthened the potential for the employment of women, especially in selected agri-business value chains.

## TACKLING GENDER DISPARITY IN NATURAL RESOURCE USE

In recognising the different gender roles in the management and use of natural resources, a gender perspective is necessary. Danida's Natural Resource Management (NRM) Programme stresses the need to establish special measures, if required, to improve equality between men and women with regard to their rights, access and control of resources, and decision-making roles. The strategy for mainstreaming gender in the NRM Programme focuses on issues that clearly define, document and address gender inequality. By emphasising poverty reduction as a primary objective, the programme recognises the important links between poverty and environment. The programme upholds the rights of both genders in natural resources and environment services that are essential to their livelihoods and well-being.