

## ANNEX Q

THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA PROGRAMME:  
ENHANCING ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY (2019 – 2024)

# GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY

UN ENVIRONMENT/MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN  
OCTOBER 2018

*This strategy was prepared during the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) phase  
of the MedProgramme (June – September 2018)*

by: Debasmita Boral  
Gender Consultant, Mediterranean Action Plan  
e: [debasmita.boral@gmail.com](mailto:debasmita.boral@gmail.com)  
t: (+254) 0700-225-234

# Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 Defining Gender Mainstreaming	3
1.2 Global Environment Facility and UN Environment	4
1.3 The MedProgramme Gender Mainstreaming Strategy	6
2. METHODOLOGY	6
3. BASELINE SCENARIO FOR MEDPROGRAMME COMPONENTS	7
4. BASELINE SCENARIO FOR MEDPROGRAMME COMPONENTS	13
5. THE MEDPROGRAMME'S GENDER APPROACH, TARGETS AND COMPONENTS	31
5.1 Means to an End	31
5.2 Targets and Components	31
5.3 Visualization	33
6. OPERATIONALIZING THE STRATEGY – THE MED APPROACH	35
6.1 Defining the MED Strategy	35
6.2 Mapping the MED Strategy (Child Projects)	33
7. CONCLUSION	38

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Defining Gender Mainstreaming – from 1997 to 2017

In 2017, shortly after the 23<sup>rd</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP) in Bonn concluded with the ‘Fiji Momentum for Implementation’, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) announced its pioneering Gender Action Plan. The COP23 Presidency underscored the priority of the Plan<sup>1</sup> to increase awareness of, and generate support for the development and effective implementation for, gender-responsive climate and environmental action. Showcasing not only the consensus of the State Parties on these key issues, this critical achievement encapsulates the growing international efforts towards gender mainstreaming and the integration of gender equality perspectives in sectoral policies and programs, since articulated by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) twenty years ago.

In July 1997, the Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming, appointed by the ECOSOC, laid out the tenets of gender mainstreaming, which continue to spur and inform UN action:

*“Gender Mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality”.*<sup>2</sup>

Elaborating upon this definition, the Division for the Advancement of Women on Gender Mainstreaming, added:

*“Gender Mainstreaming requires more than a quantitative change in numbers of women and men participating in, or benefiting from, policies and programs. It requires a transformation of all sectoral policies at all levels, and of institutions, organizational practices, attitudes and systems that shape them so that they fully consider the realities, needs, and views of women.”*<sup>3</sup>

The conceptualization and definition of Gender Mainstreaming, as presented above, derives from, and builds on, the preceding conversation of inclusion of women and gendered considerations in development policy. To elucidate, it does not represent a ‘totally’ new approach – but rather, a unique take on gender and developmental policy antecedents dating back to the early 1970s. Functioning as a pivot, gender mainstreaming builds on the Gender and Development (GAD) approach, which differentiates itself from the preceding Women in Development (WID) and Women and Development (WAD) approach, by discarding the notion that gender perspectives should automatically entail the demarcation of women as a target group. The image below<sup>4</sup> visualizes the timeline of these different approaches leading up to gender mainstreaming, the approach chosen for the Mediterranean Sea Program (MedProgramme): Enhancing Environmental Security Gender Strategy towards

<sup>1</sup> See *Recommendations of the Subsidiary Body of Implementation on Gender and Climate Change* (Agenda No. 20). UNFCCC. (2017)

<sup>2</sup> See *Gender Mainstreaming: An Overview* for more. United Nations. (2002)

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> The image was developed by the author from: Rathgeber, E. “WID, WAD, GAD: Trends in Research and Practice”. International Development Research Centre (Ottawa). Paper Presentation at the meetings of the Canadian Institute for the Advancement of Women held in Quebec City. (1988)

incorporating gender-responsive project outcomes, gender-sensitive policy formulations, and gender-aware decision-making.

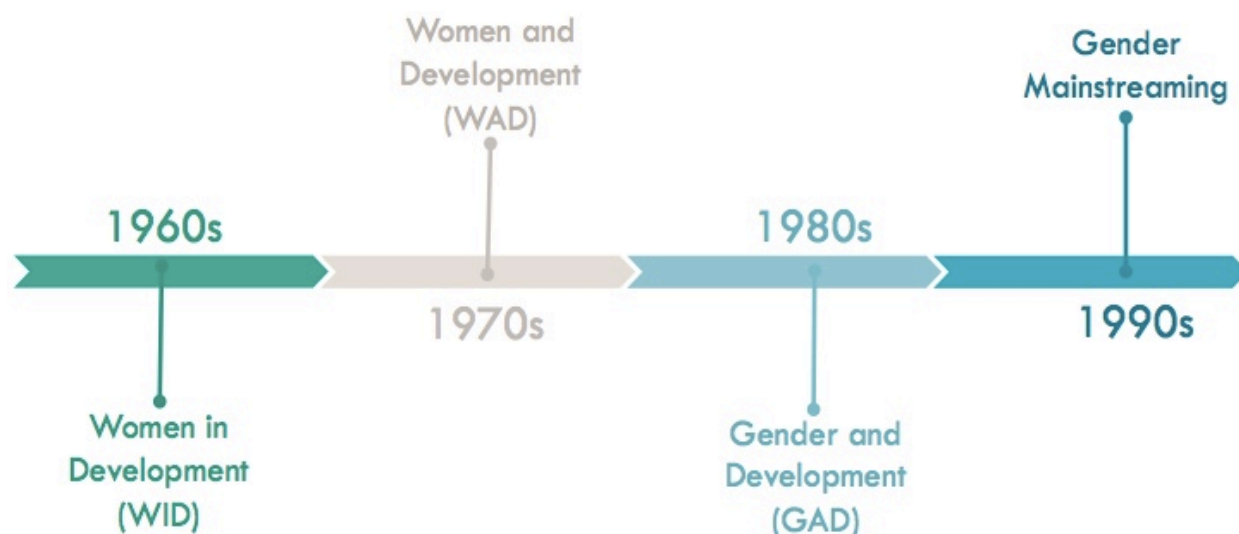


Figure 1: Timeline towards present-day Gender Mainstreaming approach. (adapted from Rathgeber [1988] by author)

## 1.2 Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UN Environment

Keeping with the above mandate of gender mainstreaming and promoting women's empowerment, both the GEF and UN Environment have prioritized delivering inclusive and gender-responsive environmental results, and adaptation and mitigation solutions towards climate risks.

Having launched its initial gender policy in 2011, the GEF approved a reinforced policy in November 2017<sup>5</sup> at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Council Meeting, shifting the focus from a 'gender-aware, do no harm' approach to a 'gender-responsive, do good' approach. This requires robust standards in the design, implementation and evaluation of GEF activities, and introducing measures that will allow the GEF, over time, to better leverage strategic opportunities to address gender gaps critical to the achievement of global environment benefits.<sup>6</sup> More recently, the GEF-7 Programming Directions, prepared by the Secretariat in the April 2018 Stockholm meeting further clarifies the GEF's evolving and progressive gender strategy – by providing action points for each GEF focal point.<sup>7</sup> It lays out clear gender standards for each domain under the GEF, and for the MedProgramme, gender directives of the:

- a. Biodiversity focal area (such as: assessments to understand gender-disaggregated biological resource, providing women and other natural resource-dependent groups equal partnership in protection management);
- b. Climate Change focal area (such as: incorporating action points to address the different climate risks faced by men, women, boys and girls and providing adaptation alternatives that improve the status quo);

<sup>5</sup> See here for the latest GEF Gender Mainstreaming guide (EN). GEF. (2017) (publication)

<sup>6</sup> "A new Policy on Gender Equality for the GEF". GEF official website. (2017) (news update)

<sup>7</sup> GEF-7 Replenishment – Programming Directions. Meeting Report from the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting held at Stockholm, Sweden for the Seventh Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, in April 2018.

- c. Chemicals and Waste focal area (such as: understanding the socioeconomic dynamics that expose men and women to different chemicals, as well as their biological implications),
  - d. IW focal area (such as: gender assessments and social analysis during project preparation, and differentiated reporting of output indicators and additional measures based on the GEF's Gender Action Plan<sup>8</sup>)
- are particularly relevant and have been incorporated as action points for the operationalization for this Strategy.

UN Environment recognizes the role of gender equality as a 'driver of sustainable environment development'<sup>9</sup>, particularly to enhance environmental security and climate resilience; to assuage the stresses on natural resources and dependent communities, including unsustainable management of coastal resources; and to preserve the health of large marine ecosystems (like the Mediterranean) which provide environmental and economic services to coastal populaces. Overall, the organization focuses on the increased visibility and capacity of vulnerable groups in sustainable development policy- and decision-making. To that end, the agency has produced a lessons-learned report<sup>10</sup>, through gender case study compilation, on issues homologous with the overall MedProgramme agenda: gender integration in Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), marine and coastal pollution, coastal disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, coastal developmental planning, and advocacy for gender-inclusive marine ecosystem management and research.

### 1.3 *The MedProgramme Gender Mainstreaming Strategy*

The MedProgramme represents a pioneering effort, being the first GEF programmatic multi-focal initiative in the Mediterranean region, aiming to operationalize agreed-upon priority actions to reduce major transboundary environmental stresses in its coastal areas, while strengthening climate resilience and water security, as well as improving the health and livelihoods of coastal populations. The MedProgramme will be implemented in nine beneficiary countries sharing the Mediterranean basin: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia. The Lead GEF Agency is UN Environment<sup>11</sup>. Its eight Child Projects<sup>12</sup> cut across four different Focal Areas of the GEF (Biodiversity, Chemicals and Waste, Climate Change, and International Waters), and involve a wide spectrum of developmental and societal sectors, ranging from banking institutions, the private sector, government and non-government bodies, industry, research, media, and various other organizations.

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 55.

<sup>9</sup> *Gender Equality and the Environment: Policy and Strategy*. UN Environment. (2015)

<sup>10</sup> *Regional Seas Reports and Studies No. 207* (forthcoming). Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Unit. UN Environment. (2018)

<sup>11</sup> GEF Lead Agency: UN Environment. Other GEF Agencies: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Executing Partners: UNEP/MAP, European Investment Bank (EIB), UNESCO International Hydrological Program (IHP), Global Water Partnership (GWP) Med, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), MEDPOL, UNIDO, and IUCN.

<sup>12</sup> At the time of its approval in 2016, the MedProgramme comprised of seven Child Projects. Subsequently, UN Environment/MAP developed a Mediterranean-focused climate change adaptation project, for financing through the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF). It was agreed by the UN Environment/MAP, UN Environment and the GEF that this SCCF project would be managed, for all intents and purposes, as an additional Child Project of the MedProgramme. Hence, the number of Child Projects now stands at eight.

Seeking to maintain funding agency (GEF) and lead agency (UN Environment) organizational priorities outlined above, as well as preparing for a proactive GEF-7 ready portfolio, this Gender Mainstreaming Strategy, developed in the Project Preparation Grant (PPG – between June to September, finalized in October) phase, will: provide tailored action points to improve the gender status quo in the countries; place gender-responsive activities and gender-aware policy-making at the core of the MedProgramme agenda; and partake as well as further the existing efforts on gender equality, to leverage opportunities for inclusive and accessible environmental and social co-benefits.

## 2. Methodology

This Gender Mainstreaming Strategy (GMS), as contextualized above, has been tailored for the MedProgramme. Developed with a two-fold framework, the Strategy is informed by: (a) political ecology and gender studies literature<sup>13</sup>(presented below) to establish a mixed methodology, and (b) Program component- and country-level diagnostics to identify the baseline scenario (Section 3), which the Strategy expects to positively impact with strategic, selective and appropriate mainstreaming measures in project-specific contexts.

At the outset, this Strategy adopts a political ecology lens, which aims to influence policy development, environmental action and investment programs by ‘offering chains of explanations’ rather than single and disjointed root causes. This perspective, when combined with a gender-lens, highlights the socio-political dimensions of coastal and natural resource access, control, distribution and agency, which further govern issues such as environmental degradation, climate risks and resource management policies.

In the words of Rocheleau (1996), gender is relevant to a political ecology perspective as:

*“A critical variable in shaping resource access and control, interacting with class, caste, race, culture and ethnicity, to shape process of ecological change, the struggle of men and women to sustain ecologically viable livelihoods, and the prospects of community for sustainable development.”<sup>14</sup>*

Thus, as the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the MedProgramme, this Strategy will espouse and embed the use of a combined political ecology- and gender-lens for the constituent projects. This will create a Program-wide focus (albeit, in different site-specific contexts) on understanding the spatially and temporally contingent ways in which gender issues, social relations, and the environment interact. This programmatic approach will, then, be able to consider the gamut of gendered dimensions present in the Mediterranean, such as: gender division of labor, male and female participation in labor, gendered environmental rights and responsibilities, environmental politics and governance, and collective action and resilience.

Secondly, the importance of gender-relevant and vetted data to provide empirical evidence to the policy and program needs is prioritized. Thus, available data indicators (particularly,

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<sup>13</sup> Bauhardt, C. & Harcourt, W. *Feminist Political Ecology and the Economics of Care*. (2018) has been a critical influence on this Gender Mainstreaming Strategy.

<sup>14</sup> Rocheleau, D. E. *Gender and Environment: A Feminist Political Ecology Perspective*. (1996)

from the World Bank Gender Data Portal and UNDP indices) and country-specific (and where available, local site-specific) statistics have been extensively used to justify the concerns raised by the Strategy. The data on each country has been collated through gender diagnostics of desk-reviewed literature and secondary statistics, which has further revealed the existing inconsistency and low relevance accorded to gender considerations and corresponding statistics within on-going environmental projects, programs and policies.

Thus, by using gender-relevant data to contextualize its priorities, the Strategy will attempt to set an example and highlight both the need to incorporate targeted and selective gender actions based on empirical data within the MedProgramme, as well as the urgency to bolster internal and country-level monitoring systems for the collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated, environmentally-related data from project, sub-national and national levels.

### *3. Baseline Scenario for MedProgramme Components*

The MedProgramme builds on the significant achievements of the MedPartnership<sup>15</sup> and ClimVar & ICZM<sup>16</sup> GEF Projects. The latter have enriched the knowledge on the Mediterranean environment and unraveled the implications of climate change and variability in the region; strengthened countries' mutual trust, cooperation and common purpose; consolidated the partnership among countries, UN bodies, Civil Society Organizations, bilateral donors and the European Union; tested on the ground feasibility and effectiveness of technical and policy instruments aimed at addressing major present and future threats to environmental sustainability and climate-related impacts. However, despite these different successes, the two projects were limited by the lack of adequate gender-responsive planning in their sectoral strategies and programs. This represents a 'missed opportunity', as incorporating the gender-lens from project preparation phase through to the monitoring and evaluation phase aid in the mapping of links between gender and environment, as well as identifying positive synergy and improve social/gender and environment outcomes from the outset. This Gender Mainstreaming Strategy, which has been developed as an input in the MedProgramme's preparation phase with the scope of scaling up in parallel with the advancement of the program cycle, thus addresses the gender-blind baseline represented by earlier initiatives.

The MedProgramme represents a comprehensive and powerful response to the environmental and socioeconomic challenges faced by the Mediterranean, in light of continued degradation of coastal zones, growing impacts of climate variability, and loss of livelihoods and deterioration of social conditions. Its objective is to kick-start the implementation of agreed-upon priority actions to reduce the major transboundary environmental stresses affecting the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal areas, while

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<sup>15</sup> Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem-Regional Component: Implementation of Agreed Actions for the Protection of the Environmental Resources of the Mediterranean Sea and its Coastal Areas (MedPartnership) – GED ID 2600

<sup>16</sup> Integration of climatic variability and change into national strategies to implement the ICZM protocol in the Mediterranean (ClimVar & ICZM) – GED IF 3990.



strengthening climate resilience and water security, and improving the health and livelihoods of coastal populations. The focus will be primarily on hotspots of land-based pollution, harmful chemicals and wastes (POPs and mercury), and excess nutrients; critical sections of the coastal zone particularly affected by climatic variability, freshwater stress and habitat degradation the efficient and sustainable management of priority marine protected areas; measuring progress to impacts and overall Program coherence. Dedicated Child Projects (eight) will prioritize each of these key issues. The Child Projects will be entry points for gender mainstreaming actions through gender assessments and action plans that determine targeted gender-responsive action through project objectives and outcomes at the project, local and national level.

The following table posits the hypothetical effects of a gender-blind approach to the MedProgramme components (the tentative child project – CP – is mentioned alongside), as opposed to mainstreaming robust gender outcomes within the same:

**TABLE I: GENDER-BLIND v. GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH**

MedProgramme Component	CP	What is a <i>gender-blind</i> approach?	What is a <i>gender-responsive</i> approach?
Reduction of land-based pollution in priority coastal hotspots, and measuring progress to impacts	1.1	Top sources of land-based pollution, contaminating marine and coastal hotspots, result out of anthropogenic activities such as usage of heavy metals and untreated dumping in river systems, sewage, litter, plastic pollution, usage of pesticides and fertilizers and synthetic organic compounds. <sup>17</sup> Due to the ubiquitous access and usage of marine resources, the coastal populace is vulnerable to the detrimental effects of	Oxfam's <i>Handbook of Development and Relief</i> provides one of the pioneering accounts of the connections between poverty and environmental degradation, noting a ' <i>downward spiral of cause and effect</i> ' – ' <i>poverty can cause environmental degradation, as poor people over-exploit already strained resources, and environmental degradation causes further poverty as people are unable to find the resources to meet their daily needs.</i> ' <sup>18</sup> Environmental change, climate disruptions and damage to marine systems and coastal zones have gendered impacts, and women and men shoulder these burdens differently. In what is identified as the ' <i>feminization of poverty</i> ' or women's increasing burden of and share in global poverty, economists and development analysts have observed that ' <i>women constitute an estimated 70% of the world's poor people, and households headed by</i>

<sup>17</sup> Windom, H. L. "Contamination of marine environment from land-based sources" in *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, (Vol. 25, No. 1-4). (1992)

<sup>18</sup> Eade, D. & Williams, S. *The Oxfam Handbook of Development and Relief*. (1994)



	1.2	land-based pollutants, and therefore, marine pollutants, both in health and livelihood indicators.	<p><i>women alone.... are the world's poorest households as a general trend.</i><sup>19</sup> For example, environmental degradation-induced livelihood impacts are differentiated in coastal areas – fishing communities, based on local gender norms and informal nature of work, relegate remunerative activities (which often tend to be associated with risk, like ‘going out to the waters’) to the men, while women perform post-harvest work, which may not always be remunerated properly, if at all. The gendered allocation of remuneration, thus, creates a disparity in economic capital, and in turn impedes the capacity to adapt to environmental change and climate disruptions. Marine contaminants threaten both human health and the health of marine organisms. However, health impacts are gender-differentiated as well. Many marine and coastal contaminants are particularly dangerous for pregnant women and lactating mothers, as well as for fetal development.<sup>20</sup></p>
	1.3		

<sup>19</sup>

*Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>

See *Global Gender Environment Outlook*, Section 2.5 for more. UN Environment. (2016)

Enhancing sustainability and climate resilience in coastal zones	2.1	<p>According to a recent report<sup>21</sup>, ocean-related activities in the Mediterranean Sea generate an annual economic value of 450 billion dollars with economic assets for coastal economies and communities amounting to 5.6 trillion dollars. The need for enhancing sustainability and climate resilience in the region is crucial, as the Mediterranean is experiencing a number of immediate coastal problems, which require both short-term and long-term coastal management. Regional scale studies indicate that the Mediterranean is particularly vulnerable to increased flooding and saltwater intrusion as sea levels rise.<sup>22</sup> The region has also been marked out as a ‘hot spot of climate change’, with an increase in air temperature range of 2.2°C to 5.1°C predicted over the period of 2080 – 2099.<sup>23</sup></p>	<p>While impacts of environmental degradation and climate risks are undoubtedly severe for the entire coastal populaces, men and women, privileged and vulnerable communities, young and the elderly shoulder burdens unequally. Often the vulnerable and marginalized groups are limited by the exclusion of their needs and perspectives from regional negotiations and management policies.</p> <p>The immediate and long-term coastal problems being faced by the Mediterranean have implications for complex gender relations in the region, which are a kaleidoscope<sup>24</sup> of overlapping social, economic and cultural roles, spread across a diverse multitude of countries and communities.</p> <p>The European Mediterranean countries have distinct social patterns and gender norms, which differ from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Mediterranean countries, for example. Additionally, the varying political situations in the region also determine how women and men are able to access and leverage sustainable development opportunities to be able to cope with environmental degradation, pressures on natural resources and coastal and marine ecosystems, and climate risks.</p> <p>For the northern Mediterranean countries (the Western Balkan nations), labor market dynamics exhibit a significant gender gap: women’s employment rates (especially for marginalized communities such as Romas) are lower, along with an existing gender wage gap. Since economic capital is among the important determinants of coping capacities to external shocks (in this case, water stress, degradation of coastal aquifers, loss of</p>
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<sup>21</sup> See *Reviving the Economy of the Mediterranean Sea: Actions for a Sustainable Future* for more. WWF and The Boston Consulting Group. (2017)

<sup>22</sup> Nicholls, R. J. & Hoozemans, F. M. N. “The Mediterranean: vulnerability to coastal implications of climate change” in *Ocean and Coastal Management*, (Vol. 31, No. 2-3). (1996)

<sup>23</sup> See *Climate Change and Energy in the Mediterranean* for more. European Investment Bank. (2008)

<sup>24</sup> See [this report](#) by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) regarding an action plan towards investing in gender equality in the region.

	2.2		<p>coastal livelihoods, climate impacts et al), women (and other marginalized groups, including ethnic minorities) are more likely to be vulnerable. The ‘double disadvantage’ of the situation should also be reckoned with: due to lack of viable economic capital, vulnerable groups are often excluded from socio-political control over coastal zone and water resources (coastal aquifers, particularly) management policies – increasing the possibilities of exposure to the threats looming in the Mediterranean region. For MENA countries, coupled with barriers to the labor market and employment opportunities, women face institutionalized exclusion from civil society and political spheres. Decision-making power within the household and the polity is limited, reducing women’s capacities to engage in the public sphere and gear development opportunities to safeguard their interests. In recent years, however, women have been capitalizing on opportunities presented by pluralistic interpretations of traditional gender norms and entering both the work force and the public space. The gains achieved through social change in this region may not keep pace with the risks and threats arising from the lack of proper management policies for natural resources and the coastal zone, and growing threats of climate change and environmental degradation in the region. As with the European Mediterranean countries, burdens of emerging risks and shocks may fall on the vulnerable groups.</p> <p><i>(Refer to footnote 12, for more information on the SCCF Project – and why it is a Child Project under the MedProgramme)</i></p>
	SCCF		
Protecting marine biodiversity	3.1	The Mediterranean’s biodiversity underpins the ability of ecosystems	Until recently, there was a lacuna in the empirical and normative literature on gender and marine biodiversity. However,

		<p>to provide humans with the services they require to survive – although as Hooper shows, delineating the role of biodiversity in ecosystem services and relative roles of difference functional groups has been extremely complex. The Mediterranean’s predominantly coastal population is increasingly threatened by the loss of biodiversity, due to mismanagement and unsustainable use, and this situation is projected to worsen with the coupled effects of human-induced climate impacts, such as warming sea surface temperatures, altering ocean chemistry and increasing run-off of land-based pollutants and sediments.<sup>25</sup> Resuscitating and protecting these marine ecosystems, which form the resource base for coastal economic and social activities, requires all possible expedition.</p>	<p>with reviewed studies on the role of gender with respect to conservation, particularly that of mangroves and their ecological significance, brought to light the clear link between gender and biodiversity and conservation outcomes. According to the Convention on Biological Diversity, considering gender issues in relation to biodiversity involves identifying the gender roles and relations have on the use, management and conservation of biodiversity. To begin with, this MedProgramme component should address the knowledge gap regarding gendered biodiversity practices in the region, through extensive data and information collection, stakeholder consultations and focused-group discussions. This would contribute towards gender-responsive policies within marine resource management and biodiversity conservation plans that can increase the sustainability of outcomes by incorporating artisanal and traditional knowledge gathered from both women and men. Exposing gender-differentiated biodiversity practices<sup>26</sup> will also help demarcate the different levels of harm caused by different groups (income-generating activities, traditionally relegated to men, may be more exploitative in some instances), as well as the inequalities in control of resources. Biodiversity conservation plans can be truly effective if they address poverty, inequality and resource access dynamics among coastal communities.<sup>27</sup></p>
Knowledge management and program coordination	4.1	<p>Knowledge management and program coordination, if carried out with a top-down approach and without a stakeholder-facing participatory approach, risks excluding the needs</p>	<p>Robust coordination and knowledge management strategies panning the MedProgramme have to be operationalized to ensure its success. Given the breadth and value of the initiative, as well as the numerous partners and focus points, these strategies will ensure: stakeholder representation</p>

<sup>25</sup> Lockwood, M. et al. “Marine biodiversity conservation governance and management: Regime requirements for global environmental change” in *Ocean and Coastal Management*, (Vol. 69). (2012)

<sup>26</sup> See the gender tab on *Convention on Biological Diversity* for more.

<sup>27</sup> The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity hosted a meeting in Bangkok (December 2017) to develop training material to advance gender inclusion in biodiversity planning in the Asia-Pacific region. See the reporting [here](#).

		<p>and concerns of beneficiaries. Additionally, procedural and red tape hurdles tend to disproportionately affect those with limited resources and access to governing mechanisms, support organizations and implementing agencies.</p>	<p>and engagement, technical and administrative coordination of the program; establish a commune of practice and initiative among different stakeholders and partners; management of knowledge generated on an accessible platform (both data and normative) as well as dissemination of lessons learnt and best practices in later stages of the program cycle; high-quality and timely systems for monitoring of the Program's progress to impacts. In tandem with a knowledge management and program coordination strategy, a gender mainstreaming strategy for the MedProgramme will be developed to provide critical gender-responsive research inputs for Programme components, as well as to espouse a gender-aware policy in the region, taking stock of the existent inequities and gender norms of the Mediterranean. Gender mainstreaming shall be pursued within the different Child Projects, with tailored gender assessments and action plans determining strategic and selective action to improve the baseline inequality within project- and country-specific dimensions. This will safeguard the interests and priorities of the vulnerable and marginalized communities among the Mediterranean coastal populaces, as well as increase the sustainability and inclusion of the MedProgramme's priorities in the region and contribute to the regional conversation on decreasing inequality, poverty and vulnerability.</p>
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#### *4. Baseline Scenario for MedProgramme Countries*

The nine Mediterranean countries participating in the MedProgramme (Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia), face different developmental challenges and socioeconomic disparities, as seen from the country profiles, developed for this Gender Mainstreaming Strategy.. These data profiles borrow from UNDP's Human Development Index, Gender Inequality Index, and Gender

Development Index. Additionally, they refer to the Global Gender Gap Index (World Economic Forum) and compiles national-level poverty statistics (conducted by national authorities of the nine countries, as well as the World Bank, in some cases). These indices have differing methodologies, and are being employed, at the outset, as indicative (and *not* conclusive) measures of current levels of development, gender equality, and poverty and labor force participation.

As Booysen’s research<sup>28</sup> shows, composite indices present both challenges and advantages. It should be noted that numerous fallacies have been identified in the methodologies employed in composite indexing. These indices are mainly quantitative, and present empirical and aggregate measures of complex development phenomena, making values apparently objective, at the cost of subjective nuances. Yet, these also remain invaluable as useful supplements to income-based development indicators, understanding relative degrees of development, simplifying complex measurement constructs as well as providing access to non-technical audiences. To balance this dichotomy, ranks have been removed in certain indices and have been linked in the footnoting, and the broader development categories (high/medium/low development) have been used.

**TABLE II: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI)<sup>29</sup>**  
(out of 188 countries – United Nations Development Program – UNDP, 2018)

**Defining the HDI:** This index measures and combines three basic dimensions of human development (long and healthy life, knowledge and decent standard of living) and provides an overall socioeconomic landscape of a country.

**Relevance of the HDI:** Since socioeconomic capital and security are crucial determinants of the capacities to adapt towards natural resource stress, loss of coastal livelihoods, marine and environmental degradation, and climate risks, this index indicates how poised each country may be to consider different resource management, resilience, adaptation and mitigation options.

**Indicative, not conclusive:** In line with Booysen’s argument, the HDI should be treated as indicative, not conclusive. It provides an overview of relative degree of development in a particular country but remains a ‘synthetic indicator’. Recent research has shown the need to supplement the HDI with other indicators associated with economic and social cohesion, sound development strategies, and sustainability in growth models.<sup>30</sup>

Country	Rank	Relevance
Albania	68 <sup>th</sup>	With ‘high human development’, Albania’s capacity to adapt to climate risks and variability is pegged well. However, due to regional variation in poverty rates (high in the Kukës prefecture – 22% v. Gjirokastër prefecture (qarks) – 8%, in particular <sup>31</sup> ) in the country, environmental services and social co-benefits may not be equitably shared.

<sup>28</sup> Booysen, F. “An Overview and Evaluation of Composite Indices of Development” in *Social Indicators Research*, (Vol. 59 No. 2). (2002)

<sup>29</sup> UNDP. (2018)

<sup>30</sup> Bilbao-Ubillos, J. “The Limits of *Human Development Index*” in *Sustainable Development*, (Vol. 21 No. 6). (2011)

<sup>31</sup> *Portraits of Poverty and Inequality in Albania*. INSTAT (Albanian Institute of Statistics) & World Bank. (2015)



Country	Rank	Relevance
Algeria	85 <sup>th</sup>	With ‘high human development’, Algeria wields capital, largely derived from its oil economy, in readiness against climate shocks. However, due to high inequality in consumption, high unemployment rates (particularly, women and youth) and largely informal workforce <sup>32</sup> , environmental services and social co-benefits may not be equitably shared.
Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)	77 <sup>th</sup>	With ‘high human development’, BiH’s capacity to adapt to climate risks and variability is pegged high and similar to Algeria. As a post-conflict nation, however, educational attainment and labor market access continue to be determined by poverty status <sup>33</sup> in the country, thus, environmental services and social co-benefits may not be shared.
Egypt	115 <sup>th</sup>	With ‘medium human development’, Egypt’s readiness towards adopting climate risk mitigation and adaptation opportunities might be limited, wherein the government may prioritize other pressing developmental pursuits. <sup>34</sup> With a volatile political climate, and entrenched gender inequality, environmental services and social co-benefits may not be equitably shared.
Lebanon	80 <sup>th</sup>	With ‘high human development’, Lebanon’s capacity to adapt to climate risks and variability is pegged well. However, due to high concentration of income and wealth in the country <sup>35</sup> and the spill-over effects of the Syrian civil war, environmental services and social co-benefits may not be equitably shared.
Libya	108 <sup>th</sup>	With ‘medium human development’, Libya’s readiness towards adopting climate risk mitigation and adaptation opportunities might be limited, wherein the government may prioritize other seemingly pressing developmental pursuits. With a volatile political climate challenging economic stability <sup>36</sup> , dependence on oil production and entrenched gender inequality, environmental services and social co-benefits may not be equitably shared.
Montenegro	50 <sup>th</sup>	With ‘very high human development’, Montenegro is poised to adapt well to climate risks. However, due to historic ethnic exclusionism (the Roma population, in particular <sup>37</sup> ) in the country, environmental services and social co-benefits may not be equitably shared.
Morocco	123 <sup>rd</sup>	With ‘medium human development’, Morocco’s readiness towards adopting climate risk mitigation and adaptation opportunities might be limited, wherein the government may prioritize other seemingly pressing developmental pursuits. Pronounced gender inequality in the country slows economic growth <sup>38</sup> , environmental services and social co-benefits may not be equitably shared.
Tunisia	95 <sup>th</sup>	With ‘high human development’, Tunisia’s capacity to adapt to climate risks and variability is pegged well. However, due to concentration of income and wealth in the country <sup>39</sup> , high unemployment rates (particularly, youth) and economic unrest challenging political stability, environmental services and social co-benefits may not be equitably shared.

<sup>32</sup> “Poverty has fallen in the Maghreb, but inequality persists”. World Bank. (2016)

<sup>33</sup> *Poverty and Inequality in BiH*. World Bank. (2011)

<sup>34</sup> *Inequalities, Uprisings and Conflicts in the Arab World. MENA Monitor*. World Bank. (2015)

<sup>35</sup> Assouad, L. “Rethinking the Lebanese Economic Miracle”. WID. (2017)

<sup>36</sup> *Libya Economic Outlook*. World Bank. (2018)

<sup>37</sup> *Gender at a Glance: Montenegro*. World Bank. (2015)

<sup>38</sup> “Reducing gender inequality in Morocco can boost growth”. IMF. (2017)

<sup>39</sup> *Tunisia: Economic Outlook*. World Bank. (2018)

**TABLE III: GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX (GII)<sup>40</sup>**

(out of 159 countries – UNDP, 2018)

**Defining the GII:** This index, showing inequality in achievement between men and women in three aspects (reproductive health, empowerment and labor market), provides a useful gender baseline in terms of health equity, economic capital and financial access, speaking to the gender opportunities of men and women in the countries. This baseline has been elaborated upon using existing gender studies literature on each country.

**Relevance of the GII:** This index provides a primary understanding of the different levels of achievements on basic development indicators between men and women. This displays useful features towards the gender status quo hypotheses, which could then be derived in the context of this project.

**Indicative, not conclusive:** In line with Booyesen's argument, the GII should be treated as indicative, not conclusive. Pernmayer finds that the functional form of the index could be unclear, particularly the inclusion of indicators of relative performance of women vis-à-vis men, along with absolute women-specific indicators.<sup>41</sup>

Country	Rank	Relevance
Albania	52 <sup>nd</sup>	In Albania, traditional beliefs continue to influence gender roles, particularly in the household setting. During socialist rule, although policies promoted women's presence in the public sphere (through education and work), the continued responsibility for unpaid domestic work remained with women (leading to time poverty or 'double shifts'). During the transition to a capitalist economy, gender equality laws were not put in place for private sector jobs, and thus, employment for Albanian women could not be safeguarded. <sup>42</sup>
Algeria	100 <sup>th</sup>	In Algeria, social codes affect women's empowerment. Since labor force participation disparity is pronounced, women lag behind on economic capital needed to combat risks arising from environmental degradation, mismanagement of water and coastal resources, and climate shocks. According to the Arab Barometer, in 2017, compared to 2013, a greater number of Algerians regarded higher education as more important for men, as well as reinforced the notion that married women should be ideally relegated to household duties. <sup>43</sup> This also makes them dependent on the patrilocal structure of Algerian society.
Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)	37 <sup>th</sup>	Despite progress in closing the gender gap in endowments - mainly in education among the younger generation - BiH still faces a number of gender issues, particularly in women's access to economic and employment opportunities. Alongside improved educational outcomes, significant gaps remain in labor market participation and employment in favor of men, as women continue to face challenges in accessing economic opportunities. <sup>44</sup> Additional obstacles continue to exist for women in exercising agency (the power to choose and decide options to preserve to act for oneself), particularly managing domestic work, lack of political representation and participation as well as widespread gender-based violence.

<sup>40</sup> UNDP. (2018)

<sup>41</sup> Pernmayer, I. "A Critical Assessment of the UNDP's Gender Inequality Index" in *Feminist Economics*, (Vol. 19 No. 2). (2013)

<sup>42</sup> World Bank. (2012)

<sup>43</sup> "Droits des femmes en Algérie: les lois progressent mais pas les mentalités". *Middle East Eye*. (2017)

<sup>44</sup> BiH: *Economic Mobility, Jobs and Gender*. World Bank. (2016)

Country	Rank	Relevance
Egypt	101 <sup>st</sup>	Political, social and economic capitals are not equitably distributed among Egyptian men and women. Without access to these vital resources, the risks identified by MedProgramme will only burden those at the lower echelons of society. Despite improvement of young women's education levels in recent times (Egypt's rank improved by 34 spots in the latest GII quoted here), the workforce participation and retention rates remain unperturbed, signaling a stagnated job market and scarce employment opportunities. <sup>45</sup> Egypt also faces some particular gender-specific barriers in high numbers, such as FGM and sexual harassment, arising out of sexual inequality between men and women in the country.
Lebanon	85 <sup>th</sup>	Lebanese women face the least gender disparity in the Arab world with their male counterparts. Despite this, discriminatory social codes, particularly the focus on intersectional civil and family laws, continue to impede women's empowerment. <sup>46</sup> Although the gender gaps at higher levels of education are reversing, women continue to face entry barriers to the labor market as well as time poverty due to the predominance of unpaid care work.
Libya	38 <sup>th</sup>	Women in Libya have had a long history of actively participating in the economic, social and political development of the country, going back to the 1950s. Yet, with Gaddafi's introduction of the <i>Declaration of the Authority of the People</i> in 1977 and the <i>Great Green Charter of Human Rights in the Age of the Masses</i> in 1988, these rights were compromised at a substantive level. <sup>47</sup> Furthermore, traditional family laws, as a general trend in the MENA region, continue to disadvantage women and exacerbate their time poverty. The 2011 uprisings signaled that women were entering the public space, yet changes in women's empowerment has been sluggish in the past seven years.
Montenegro	32 <sup>nd</sup>	Montenegro is relatively advanced in terms of progress towards gender equality. This enhances the capacities of Montenegrin men and women to face climate-risks and capitalize on adaptation opportunities. However, gender-inequitable dynamics remain in important determinants such as access to labor markets, health equity et al, rendering certain demographics vulnerable.
Morocco	119 <sup>th</sup>	Political, social and economic capitals are not equitably distributed among Moroccan men and women. Without access to these vital resources, climate risks will only burden those at the lower echelons of society. Gender equity in labor force participation is one of the lowest in the world <sup>48</sup> , disadvantaging women further: women lag behind on economic capital needed to combat climate shocks and risks.
Tunisia	63 <sup>rd</sup>	In Tunisia, traditional social codes affect women's empowerment. Since labor force participation disparity is thoroughly pronounced, women lag behind on economic capital needed to combat climate shocks and risks. This also makes them dependent on the patrilocal structure of Tunisian society. However, the January 2011 uprisings signaled that women were entering the public space, leveraging opportunities for their economic empowerment, <sup>49</sup> although it remains to be seen if the force of this societal shift can keep pace with climate risks.

<sup>45</sup> Egypt: Country Gender Assessment. World Bank. (2010)

<sup>46</sup> Lebanon: Country Gender Assessment. European Union. (2015)

<sup>47</sup> Libya: Country Profile. Gender Concerns International. (2015)

<sup>48</sup> Morocco: Country Gender Assessment. World Bank. (2015)

<sup>49</sup> Gender in MENA Projects: Tunisia. World Bank. (2011)

**TABLE IV: GENDER DEVELOPMENT INDEX (GDI)<sup>50</sup>**  
(grouped in 5 categories, 1: high equality to 5: low equality – UNDP, 2018)  
**& GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX (GGI)<sup>51</sup>**  
(out of 144 countries – World Economic Forum – WEF, 2017)

**Defining the GDI & GGI:** The GDI (UNDP) index shows the ratio of female to male HDI values. GDI expresses values in deviation, hence, in order to facilitate understanding GDI grouped categories have been used (as grouped by UNDP) to show the absolute deviation from gender parity in HDI values. This further reiterates the results of the HDI and GII (also by UNDP), and shows the real gender gap in human development achievements.

The GGI (WEF) benchmarks 144 countries on their progress towards gender parity on four thematic dimensions – economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. The Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education- and health-based criteria, and provides country rankings that allow for effective comparisons across regions and income groups, over time.

**Relevance of the GDI & GII:** Since the GDI and GGI use different methodologies, and are conducted by different agencies, this report does not suggest a causality between the two indices. However, a correlation is undeniable, and both indices pick up similar rates of gender disparity in the MedProgramme countries.

**Indicative, not conclusive:** In line with Booyesen's argument, the GDI & GII should be treated as indicative, not conclusive. Geake Dijkstra and Hanmer find that although gender-related development indices have increased attention towards 'feminization of poverty and underdevelopment', more robust data needs and indicators are required to create aggregate indices that are sensitive to contemporary trends in gendered privation, particularly with the categorization of 'women'.<sup>52</sup>

Country	GDI – Group	GGI – Rank	Relevance
<b>Albania</b>	Medium-high equality	38 <sup>th</sup>	Despite being categorized as a country with high HDI, a pronounced gender gap in Albania is evinced from the grouping and ranking.
<b>Algeria</b>	Low equality	127 <sup>th</sup>	Algeria, with Tunisia, shows the greatest disparity in development and gender equity rankings. Despite being categorized as a country with high HDI, an entrenched gender gap is revealed.
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)</b>	Medium-low equality	66 <sup>th</sup>	Despite being categorized as a country with high HDI, a pronounced gender gap in BiH is evinced from the grouping and ranking.
<b>Egypt</b>	Low equality	134 <sup>th</sup>	The gender gap in Egypt is entrenched, requiring tangible efforts to address and lessen gendered disparities in the country.
<b>Lebanon</b>	Low equality	137 <sup>th</sup>	The gender gap in Lebanon is entrenched, requiring tangible efforts to address and lessen gendered disparities in the country.

<sup>50</sup> UNDP. (2018)

<sup>51</sup> WEF. (2017)

<sup>52</sup> Geske Dijkstra, A. & Hanmer, L. C. "Measuring Socio-Economic Gender Inequality: Towards an Alternative to the UNDP Gender Index" in *Feminist Economics*, (Vol. 6, No. 2). (2000)

Country	GDI – Group	GGI – Rank	Relevance
Libya	Medium-high equality	Not available	NA
Montenegro	Medium-high equality	77 <sup>th</sup>	Although Montenegro features among the upper categories of the previous indices, this reveals a more entrenched gender gap. Women lag behind their male counterparts, in a greater amount than expected, despite very high human development achievements in the country.
Morocco	Low equality	136 <sup>th</sup>	The gender gap in Morocco is entrenched, requiring tangible efforts to address and lessen gendered disparities in the country.
Tunisia	Medium-low equality	117 <sup>th</sup>	Tunisia, with Algeria, shows the greatest disparity in development and gender equity rankings. Despite being categorized as a country with high HDI, an entrenched gender gap is revealed.

TABLE V: SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

**Note:** This table is compiled from various sources, and determines poverty levels (according to USAID income grouping), rural-urban divide and labor force participation parity in the MedProgramme countries.

**\*Poverty Level:** Environmental degradation and climate change is a threat multiplier, and often its impacts combine with poverty, hence this is an important indicator, corroborating HDI ranking. To illustrate this, the Multidimensional Poverty Index has been used. (The Oxford Poverty and Human Development Institute (OPHI), and UNDP calculate the MPI, for measuring acute poverty in developing countries. It complements traditional income-based poverty measures by capturing the severe deprivations with regard to different indicators: education, health, and living standards. The index not only identifies those living in multidimensional poverty, but the extent (or intensity) of their poverty. The MPI can help the effective allocation of resources by making possible the targeting of those with the greatest intensity of poverty; it can help address some SDGs strategically and monitor impacts of policy intervention.<sup>53</sup>

**\*Rural-Urban Divide:** Climate risks take different forms in rural and urban areas, but lack of development and investment in rural areas (particularly in the Mediterranean) often impedes adaptive capacities of vulnerable demographics, who also derive their livelihoods (in this case, coastal livelihoods) from managed and natural resources.

**\*Labor force participation parity (% of working age population active)<sup>54</sup>:** In the Mediterranean, one of the prime arenas of gender disparity is labor force participation parity. The region is plagued with high unemployment rates<sup>55</sup> (12.5% average), and this phenomenon remains a gendered one: women and youth are less likely to be employed than men, as a general trend. Additionally, the existing gap in labor force participation indicates that women possess less economic capital, and are limited to gendered (mostly unpaid care work) roles. This directly correlates to lessened participation in coastal economies and scarce or unstable livelihoods; lack of decision-making power both within the household and larger policy frameworks such as coastal resource use and water management; and, greater exposure to repercussions of marine environmental degradation, water stress and potential climate risks (which often acts as a threat multiplier, in this context).

<sup>53</sup> See UNDP's Technical Notes (2016) for more.

<sup>54</sup> *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for Women*, ILO. (2017)

<sup>55</sup> "Unemployment: The Mediterranean Effect", *World Bank*. (2012)

Please find table contents on p. 21 (adjusted for footnoting).

Country	Poverty Indices	Rural-Urban	Labor Force Participation <i>(The gender gap is calculated as the difference between women's and men's labor force participation rates – simply, the number of working age men and women employed in a country, ILO 2016)</i>
Albania	<p><b>1.2% below the National Poverty Line.</b><sup>56</sup></p> <p>The Multidimensional Poverty Index reveals that 7.2% of Albanians are precariously 'near' poverty.</p>	<p>Diber and Kukës (prefectures) show lowest rates of urbanization, and related issues: fragmentation, population decline, <i>et al.</i> Tirana and Durrës, on the other hand, have the highest level of urbanization and best performance on demographic and geographic indicators.<sup>57</sup> Rural to urban migration is common, and often unbridled, leading to environmental complications as well as socioeconomic tussles.</p>	<p><b>39.3% female</b> <b>60.7% male</b></p> <p>During the socialist rule, the government policy of full employment boosted female participation and, as a consequence employment rates were higher than the average figures of the OECD countries. Policies such as investment in childcare facilities and female education stimulated women to enter and remain in the labor market. The market economy disadvantaged women by providing unstable employment opportunities, although education outcomes and employment sectoral options have improved in recent decades, leading to the widening of the gender gap in labor force participation.<sup>58</sup></p>

<sup>56</sup> Regional disparities in Albania. UNDP. (2010)

<sup>57</sup> Regional disparities in Albania. UNDP. (2010)

<sup>58</sup> Garcia-Pereiro, T. "The Determinants of Female Employment in Albania". Open access on [ResearchGate](#). (2016)



Algeria	<p><b>11.8% below the National Poverty Line.</b><sup>59</sup></p> <p>The MPI is unavailable for the country. However, the <i>Ligue Algérienne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (LADDH)</i> reports that about 35% (14 million) of Algerians are in poverty.<sup>60</sup></p>	<p>Poverty in Algeria has a distinctly urban face: 75% of the country's poor live in cities, undertaking informal jobs without access to social safety nets. Additionally, the disproportionate rates of urban poor show that the incidences of poverty in the Algerian Sahara are twice as much than among people living in the Steppe.<sup>61</sup></p>	<p><b>19.0% female</b> <b>70.4% male</b></p> <p>Female labor force participation is low in Algeria, relating to the phenomenon that the gender difference in the labor force participation of the MENA region is the widest in the world.<sup>62</sup> However, according to ILO, the status quo is slowly altering (although not quite at an ideal pace), as there are marked difference between participation rates from 2011 to 2018.<sup>63</sup></p>
Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)	<p><b>15% below the National Poverty Line.</b><sup>64</sup></p> <p>The MPI reveals that 3.2% of the populace are precariously 'near' poverty.</p>	<p>BiH remains one of the most rural countries in Europe – with over 60% of its populace residing in rural areas.<sup>65</sup> The rural poverty rate is higher than urban areas, although income dynamics are similar.<sup>66</sup></p>	<p><b>34.4% female</b> <b>58% male</b></p> <p>Between the years 1992-1995, Bosnia and Herzegovina went through a destructive war that resulted in mass emigration of around 50% of the total population. In the period after the war, although considerable number of refugees returned, it remains unclear how the jobs market was affected around the time. With the failing of the state's strong social protection services such as long-term care, child care and elderly care, and new categories of 'returnee refugees' and 'internally-displaced people', women bear the brunt of unpaid care work. Although more women attend university than men, they continue to face sociocultural barriers in entering the labor force.<sup>67</sup></p>

<sup>59</sup> Poverty has fallen in the Maghreb, but inequality persists". *World Bank*. (2016)

<sup>60</sup> See *Ligue Algérienne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme*(LADDH)for more.

<sup>61</sup> "Poverty has fallen in the Maghreb, but inequality persists". *World Bank*. (2016)

<sup>62</sup> Women face the highest proportion of legal restrictions (*de jure* discrimination) in the MENA region, as well as sociocultural norms (*de facto* discrimination) that stipulate limits to women's entry in the public, and working sphere. Young females are particularly discouraged from seeking employment.

<sup>63</sup> This *ILO report* (2014) expounds on the factors affecting employment and labor force participation in Algeria.

<sup>64</sup> *Poverty and Inequality in BiH*. *World Bank*. (2011)

<sup>65</sup> *Rural Development in BiH: Myth and Reality*. *UNDP*. (2013)

<sup>66</sup> *Poverty and Inequality in BiH*. *World Bank*. (2011)

<sup>67</sup> This *ILO report* (2011) expounds on the factors affecting employment and gender in BiH.

Egypt	<p><b>27.8% below the National Poverty Line.</b><sup>68</sup></p> <p>Although extreme poverty has been virtually eradicated, Egypt is yet to turnaround the effects of the 2011 Arab Springs on its economy, leaving a third of Egyptians in precarious poverty. Particularly, high inflation over 2015-17 has lowered the purchasing power of households.<sup>69</sup></p>	<p>Regional disparities continue to be a part of the country's landscape, with upper rural Egypt showing poverty rates three times higher than metropolitan Egypt.<sup>70</sup></p>	<p><b>22.8% female</b> <b>76.1% male</b></p> <p>Female labor force participation is low in Egypt, relating to the phenomenon that the gender difference in the labor force participation of the MENA region is the widest in the world.<sup>71</sup> This is a significant loss as including women and enabling conditions to retain them in the workforce can boost the growth rate of the Egyptian economy.<sup>72</sup> In recent times, Egypt's performance on health and education indicators is improving, and this could change labor dynamics.</p>
Lebanon	<p><b>30% below the Middle-Income-Country Poverty Line.</b><sup>73</sup></p> <p>Although GDP increase in Lebanon remains steady, the country faces the economic and social impact of the Syrian crisis. With the influx of 1.5 million refugees, Lebanon's public finances, service delivery, and the environment have been strained, increasing poverty headcount and unemployment.<sup>74</sup></p>	<p>Lebanon's population is 87% urban, concentrated particularly in Beirut. The dynamics of urban poor show a pan-Mediterranean attribute: job creation is low, youth unemployment is high, and the vulnerable groups are trapped within the informal sector. In the rural areas, different causes entrench poverty: social protection and government service delivery are limited in these remote and mountainous regions.</p>	<p><b>23.5% female</b> <b>70.3% male</b></p> <p>Female labor force participation is low in Lebanon, relating to the phenomenon that the gender difference in the labor force participation of the MENA region is the widest in the world. This is a significant loss as including women and enabling conditions to retain them in the workforce can potentially boost the growth rate of the Lebanese economy.<sup>75</sup> Recent studies, however, show that Lebanon is leading the growth rate of female participation in labor force in the MENA region.<sup>76</sup></p>

<sup>68</sup> *Egypt: Economic Outlook*. World Bank. (2018)

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> ILO. *Women in Business and Law*. (2014)

<sup>72</sup> The Economic Research Forum (ERF), a regional forum on economic research in Arab countries, Turkey and Iran finds that encouraging the participation of women in the labor force, particularly the 'married women' demographic could usher in rapid growth for the Egyptian economy. See [here](#).

<sup>73</sup> *Lebanon: Rapid Poverty Assessment*. UNDP. (2016)

<sup>74</sup> *Lebanon: Economic Outlook*. World Bank. (2017)

<sup>75</sup> Find more on Lebanon on the ERF [website](#).

<sup>76</sup> See this AN-NAHAR [coverage](#).

Libya	<p><b>40% below the Middle-Income-Country Poverty Line.</b></p> <p>Although economic growth is projected to rebound at around 15% in 2018, Libya's oil-dependence does not benefit the majority of the Libyan populace. High inflation coupled with weak basic service delivery have exacerbated socioeconomic exclusion in the country. Libya continues to experience conflict and insecurity.</p>	<p>Libya's population is 85% urban, concentrated particularly in Tripoli, Benghazi, Misrata and Bayda. The dynamics of urban poor show a pan-Mediterranean attribute: job creation is low, youth unemployment is high, and the vulnerable groups are trapped within the informal sector.</p>	<p><b>27.8% female</b> <b>78.7% male</b></p> <p>Female labor force participation is very low in Libya, relating to the phenomenon that the gender difference in the labor force participation of the MENA region is the widest in the world. Women often take on informal sector roles, particularly starting their own small business, despite receiving higher rates of advanced education than men (77% versus 63%). Movement in Libya for women is severely limited and is another deterrent to workforce participation.</p>
Montenegro	<p><b>8.6% below the Middle-Income-Country Poverty Line.<sup>77</sup></b></p> <p>In Montenegro, there has been sustainable reduction in poverty in the last five years.</p>	<p>60.5% of the rural populace is classified poor.<sup>78</sup></p> <p>In 2010, MONSTAT finds that not only are the rural populace are at a higher poverty risk, they also face more entrenched forms of poverty.<sup>79</sup></p>	<p><b>42.5% female</b> <b>55% male</b></p> <p>As the country emerged from dirigisme, social property was privatized, and the economy sprouted 'grey areas' of undeclared or unregulated work. Post-conflict Montenegro is still reeling from the economic effects of war, which increased unemployment (17.8% in 2016)<sup>80</sup> and bolstered GDP loss. The Roma populace face entry barriers to the workforce, and employment rates are far below national averages: 47% Roma male and 8% Roma female are employed.</p>
Morocco	<p><b>15.5% below the Lower-Middle-Income-Country</b></p>	<p>3 million out of the 4 million poor live in rural areas<sup>82</sup></p>	<p><b>25% female</b> <b>74.1% male</b></p>

<sup>77</sup> The middle-income country Poverty Line, as defined by the World Bank, stands at consumption below the standardized poverty line of \$5.50/day. World Bank. (2017)

<sup>78</sup> MONSTAT. (2010)

<sup>79</sup> MIDAS Project, World Bank. (2016)

<sup>80</sup> World Bank. (2016)

<sup>82</sup> Fair Observer. (2017)

	<p><b>Poverty Line.</b><sup>81</sup></p> <p>In Morocco, there has been steady decline in poverty, though the underlying factors may be remittances, deceleration of population growth and macroeconomic stability. Inequalities between rich and poor are still abounding, and poverty essentially has a rural face in the country.</p> <p>The MPI also reveals that an additional 12.6% of Moroccans are dangerously ‘near’ poverty. Among the 15.5% poor, 5% are in ‘severe’ multidimensional poverty.</p>	<p>The subjective poverty rate has increased by 15% from 2004 figures in rural Morocco. Meanwhile, the urban poverty rate is half of the national average in 2001, and in 2014, stands at one-third.<sup>83</sup></p>	<p>Female labor force participation is low in Morocco, relating to the phenomenon that the gender difference in the labor force participation of the MENA region is the widest in the world.<sup>84</sup> However, Morocco is entering a period potential demographic dividend, with the number of working-age population, relative to below 15 and above 64 years, increasing. This could either signal a potential economic boom or an unemployment crisis, if economic activity is not encouraged and made inclusive for the marginalized.<sup>85</sup></p>
Tunisia	<p><b>24.7% below the National Poverty Line.</b><sup>86</sup></p> <p>Poverty rates in Tunisia have seen a significant increase, from 15.5% (2010) to 24.7% (2018). Income disparities are high: the top 20% of Tunisians earn 46% of the national income, while the bottom 20% earn only 5.9%.<sup>87</sup> Civil unrest since the 2011</p>	<p>Rural areas in Tunisia remain marginalized and underprivileged, leading to high rates of rural to urban migration, particularly towards Greater Tunis and its agglomeration economies.<sup>88</sup></p>	<p><b>25.1% female</b> <b>71.3% male</b></p> <p>Female labor force participation is low in Morocco, relating to the phenomenon that the gender difference in the labor force participation of the MENA region is the widest in the world.<sup>89</sup> Like Morocco, Tunisia faces crucial demographic transition in the coming years, yet barriers to the job market remain high. Young women are particularly vulnerable and face exclusion from economic activities.<sup>90</sup></p>

<sup>81</sup> The lower-middle-income country Poverty Line, as defined by the World Bank, stands at consumption below the standardized poverty line of \$3.10/day. World Bank. (2017)

<sup>83</sup> World Bank. (2018)

<sup>84</sup> ILO. *Women in Business and Law*. (2014)

<sup>85</sup> This IFAD report expounds on the factors affecting employment and gender in Morocco.

<sup>86</sup> “Poverty has fallen in the Maghreb, but inequality persists”. World Bank. (2016)

<sup>87</sup> *Tunisia: Economic Outlook*. World Bank. (2018)

<sup>88</sup> Amara, M., Jemmali, H. & Ayadi, M. “Rural-Urban Migration and Income Disparity in Tunisia”. *Economic Research Forum*. (2017)

<sup>89</sup> ILO. *Women in Business and Law*. (2014)

<sup>90</sup> This ILO report expounds on the factors affecting employment and gender in Tunisia.

	has increased poverty and unemployment and discouraged entrepreneurs and private sector actors.		
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**TABLE VI: POLICY ENVIRONMENT, LEGAL TOOLS & INSTITUTIONS**

This section explores the policy environment in the countries participating in the MedProgramme, and presents a potential list of gender stakeholders, relevant for the site-specific activities and collaborations during the project cycle. Legal tools, and enabling policies are crucial in ensuring gender inequality can be address through tangible and formal procedures. This table, compiled from various sources, particularly UN Women and the Equal Futures Partnership, thus, takes stock of international conventions, national laws and policies, and country-level stakeholders that can aid the MedProgramme in gender mainstreaming and narrowing socioeconomic gaps.

Country	Policy Tools, Legal Instruments, Institutions	Provisions
<b>Albania</b>	1994 – CEDAW	Albania signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1994.
	1998 (amended 2012) – Constitution of the Government of Albania	Article 18 establishes that all are equal before the law. No one may be unjustly discriminated against for reasons such as gender, race, religion, ethnicity, language, political, religious and philosophical beliefs.
	2016 - 2020 – National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality	The Strategy and the Action Plan represent a commitment for 2016 – 2020, with concrete interventions towards economic empowerment of women and men, ensuring actual participation and engagement in political and public decision-making processes; reducing gender-based violence and domestic violence and strengthening the coordination and monitoring role of the national mechanism of gender equality.
	Institutions	Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (with contribution of the Inter-Agency Working Group) Ministry of Justice National Referral Mechanisms
<b>Algeria</b>	1996 – CEDAW	Algeria signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1996.
	2008 – Constitution of the Government of Algeria	Under the Algerian Constitution, women enjoy the same civil and political rights as men and have the status of full citizens (Articles 29 and 31).
	Institutions	Ministry of National Solidarity, Family Affairs and Status of Women

<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)</b>	1993 – CEDAW	BiH signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1993.
	2006 – Law on Gender Equality	Bosnia’s Gender Equality Law provides definitions for direct and indirect discrimination, as well as gender-based violence and sexual harassment. It mandates the creation of gender equality of gender equality strategies and programs in education, employment, access to resources, social protection, etc.
	2014 - 2017 – National Action Plan on Gender	The NAP addresses the gender rights principles laid out in the national law, and works towards improving women’s participation in public life and decision-making, and particularly target the legacy of human trafficking and sexual slavery in the country’s post-conflict context.
	Institutions	Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees
<b>Egypt</b>	1981 – CEDAW	Egypt signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1981.
	2014 – Constitution of the Government of Egypt 1937 – Criminal Code of the Government of Egypt	The two main legislations protecting and supporting women are the Egyptian Constitution of 2014 (Articles 11, 53 and 214) and the Criminal Code of 1937. Crimes against women in Egypt are divided in two groups: misdemeanors and felonies. Misdemeanors, such as catcalling, are usually punished by fines with shortened trials. Felonies, like FGM and rape, are permanent criminal offences, punished by longer jail time.
	Integrated Gender Program (UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA)	The integrated program is helping to address multi-faceted challenges faced by women and young girl through three pillars of social, legal and economic empowerment. A similar EBRD project for the MENA region is active in Egypt as well.
	Institutions	National Council for Women



Lebanon	1997 – CEDAW	Lebanon signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1997.
	1936 – Constitution of the Government of Lebanon	The Lebanese legal system is primarily based on French Civil Code and Egyptian legal systems. Whilst there is no unified civil law in Lebanon, the Lebanese Constitution promulgated in 1926 articulates the principle of equality among all citizens (Articles 7 and 12).
	Women’s International League for Peace and Feminism (WILPF) – ABAAD Resource Centre of Gender Equality	WILPF and ABAAD are leading national consultations to develop the first National Action Plan towards gender equality currently. The EU wrapped up its ‘Gender Equity and Empowerment of Women in Lebanon’ in early 2017, which has laid groundwork towards the adoption of a quota system for women in the country.
	Institutions	National Commission for Lebanese Women
Libya	1989 – CEDAW	Libya signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1989.
	2011 - 2013 – Interim Constitutional Declaration of the Government of Libya	After the end of Gaddafi’s rule, the UN-back interim government (Government of National Accord) has overseen the development of draft constitution. Women activists in Libya are currently in the process of including substantive demands <sup>91</sup> in the draft, which will be presented to the Libyan people for referendum. This Constitution will lay out the new framework for gender equality legal tools and policy environment in the coming years.
Montenegro	2006 – CEDAW	Montenegro signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 2006.
	2007 – Law on Gender Equality	The first Law on Gender Equality was adopted in July 2007. The Law on Amendments to the Law on Gender Equality was adopted in June 2015, in line with international specifications of the UN, the EU, and the Council of Europe. This document was drafted in the context of the accession of Montenegro to the EU, based on CEDAW. Action Plan is updated every 4 years, and out of the critical areas covered in Beijing Declaration, Montenegro has opted for 9.
	2008 – Action Plan to Achieve Gender Equality in Montenegro – PAPRR	
	Institutions	The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights The Department of Gender Equality Affairs
Morocco	1993 – CEDAW	Morocco signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1993.
	2011 – Constitution of the Government of Morocco	Article 19 establishes that men and women should enjoy equal rights and freedoms in all civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental matters.

<sup>91</sup>

*Libya Women’s Demands in the Constitution*(UNDP-led Cairo consultations). (2017)

	2013 – IKRAM	The Government Plan for Equality was developed by the Government of Morocco along with key stakeholders. .
	Institutions	The Ministry of Human Rights The Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development
Tunisia	1985 – CEDAW	Tunisia signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1985. However, in April 2014, Tunisia officially lifted key reservations on the CEDAW.
	2014 – Constitution of the Government of Tunisia	The new constitution adopted in January 2014 includes strong protection for women's rights: Article 21 confirms equality of rights and duties; Article 34 guarantees women's representation in all elected bodies; and, Article 46 ensures protection of human rights.
	2015 - 2018 – Gender Equality Promotion Program in Tunisia (EU-Tunisia)	The financing agreement of the EU-Tunisia program was signed in April 2015. It aims to contribute to achieving gender equality in Tunisia by reducing inequalities at national, regional and local levels.
	Institutions	The National Council of Peers for Equality and Equal Opportunities between Women and Men Ministry of Women, Family and Children

## 5. The MedProgramme's Gender Approach, Target and Components

### 5.1 Means to an End: Transformative Gender Mainstreaming Towards Gender Equality

The conversation on gender mainstreaming to mobilize efforts on gender equality and reduction of discriminatory gender practices and social norms has gained currency as an intellectual concern, technical solution and international consensus. However, the discursive landscape of gender equality has shaped and reconfigured what gender mainstreaming could potentially achieve in different contexts, particularly– *the vision of equality* as sameness, which aspires to a gender-neutral world where women are treated according to the same principles, standards and norms as men, enjoying equal rights and opportunities; and, *the approach of difference or reversal*, which problematizes the existence of unquestioned patriarchal norms, reconstructing the political by seeking recognition of non-hegemonic gendered identities that have been treated as different in comparison to male normative identities and cultures.<sup>92</sup>

This Gender Mainstreaming Strategy adopts the latter transformative approach ('the approach of difference or reversal'), positing a gender equality vision for the MedProgramme that questions established categories and implements positive action measures towards gender-responsive actions in the Mediterranean region. In effect, gender mainstreaming is

<sup>92</sup> Verloo, M. *Multiple Meanings of Gender Equality: A critical frame analysis of gender policies in Europe*, p. 23. (2008)

therefore not an end (goal) of the MedProgramme— rather, a means (process) to an end. This approach reflects also the normative standards defined by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), which stipulates the importance of identifying gender mainstreaming as a process because it:

*“Ensures that policy-making and legislative work is of higher quality and has a greater relevance for society, because it makes policies respond more effectively to the needs of all citizens – women and men, girls and boys. Gender mainstreaming makes public interventions more effective and ensures that inequalities are not perpetuated.*

*It does not only aim to avoid the creation or reinforcement of inequalities, which can have adverse effects on both women and men. It also implies analyzing the existing situation, with the purpose of identifying inequalities, and developing policies which aim to redress these inequalities, and undo the mechanisms that caused them”.*<sup>93</sup>

## 5.2 *Targets and Components of the MedProgramme’s Gender Strategy*

Based on the above conceptual hinterland, this Strategy has identified three targets, that the eight Child Projects will address through their tailored assessments and action plans (Section 6):

### a. Address gender-blind hurdles with gender-differentiated consequences.

Although formal gender equality rights and guarantees are almost ubiquitous in the Mediterranean nations, this Strategy recognizes that gender-neutral policy language may not result in gender-egalitarian outcomes, when implemented in a gendered environment, influenced by gender imbalances and biases.<sup>94</sup> The neutral policies and laws, which are veritably gender-blind, often work in concert with social tenets, traditional norms, constitutional interpretations, and cultural expectations in ways that may stymie the advancement of gender-responsive practices. Thus, in tandem with country partners and implementing agencies, the MedProgramme will stipulate the analysis of potential gender-neutral hurdles in project- and site-specific contexts to develop targeted action towards addressing the gender-differentiated consequences.

#### **BOX 1: Female entrepreneurship in Mediterranean faces gender-blind hurdles.**

The World Bank reports that seemingly gender-neutral barriers such as cumbersome and costly procedures for opening a business and uncertain chances of recovering assets from a failed venture often have gender-differentiated consequences, notably deterring women’s entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region. Thus, gender-neutral laws, when implemented and interpreted in gendered contexts, often create ambiguities and unintended consequences for the disadvantaged. This also relates to legal inconsistencies and opaqueness afforded to gender-neutral policy language and laws by the fluid interpretation and precedence given to family law and measures, which are often derived from traditional sociocultural norms.

*Source: The Environment for Women’s Entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa. The World Bank. (2008).*

<sup>93</sup> See *Good Practices in Gender Mainstreaming*, a technical guide by EIGE.

<sup>94</sup> See *The Environment for Women’s Entrepreneurship in MENA*, p. 52. The World Bank. (2008)

b. Mitigate gender-specific barriers and discriminatory norms.

Certain barriers and discriminatory norms are framed with gender-specificity, targeting one gender or more, against normative ideals that stipulate hegemonic social identities. Gender-specific barriers have tangible and invisible discriminatory outcomes, prejudices and stigma, and are often accepted, condoned and tolerated within the larger social framework. To address these barriers, attention, awareness and resources must be accorded to address the effects of the multiplicity of social differences and gender norms to usher in enduring change and assuage the gender burdens on specific demographic groups. The MedProgramme will, hence, develop dedicated project- and country-specific gender assessments and gender action plans for each of its constituent projects and from the preparation phase through to the concluding monitoring and evaluation stage of the project cycle, with objectives (relating to broader project objectives), transformative outcomes (relating to the wider focus of the project), means of verification and indicators.

**BOX 2: Labor participation has gender-specific barriers in the Mediterranean.**

The Union for the Mediterranean, on the occasion of its Ministerial Conference in Barcelona (2015), brought the focus on the importance of fostering women's participation in economic life and on its obstacles in the region: women's low presence in paid labor, low wages – with lower wages of 10 – 40%, and a low level of access to positions of responsibility and decision-making. These gender-specific barriers are exacerbated by the current unequal share of care, domestic and reproductive unpaid labor performed by women in the Mediterranean. Women also face discrimination, violence and legal inequalities, which impede their ability to leverage opportunities towards empowerment and independence.

*Source: Visions and Actions to Promote Gender Equality in the Mediterranean. The Union for the Mediterranean. (2017).*

c. Scale up gender-sensitive policies and deliver gender-responsive outcomes.

Building on the knowledge and analysis of gender-blind and gender-specific barriers, the MedProgramme will have the imperative to use consultative and participatory tools to conduct gender-differentiated beneficiary assessments and formulate gender-sensitive policies to address the same. These gender-sensitive policies will provide the basis for gender-responsive outcomes within the results framework of the different projects, by bringing transformative change towards<sup>95</sup>: promoting equitable access to goods, services, status, and decision-making power (both within policy institutions and households); expanding the subjective and objective range of legal, social and psychological choices available to both men and women; breaking gender stereotypes, norms and patterns; and, providing the conducive environment, through capacity-building in policy institutions, governance structures and local bodies and awareness-raising among communities (particularly, male sensitization), for a pan-Mediterranean gender mainstreaming effort that is verifiable on all three accounts of accountability, transparency and incentive mechanisms. To scale up and deliver these policies and actions, the MedProgramme will stipulate gender-budget lines within the constituent projects, as dedicated resources need to be mobilized for positive impacts on the gender gap in the region.

<sup>95</sup>

See *Good Practices in Gender Mainstreaming*, a technical guide by EIGE.

**BOX 3: Agricultural reform requires gender-sensitive policies in the Mediterranean.**

Women's contribution to agricultural labor (particularly smallholder farming) in the Mediterranean Basin is significant: providing diversified income sources to households, creating empowerment opportunities, and boosting national agricultural and economic production. However, this contribution is often underplayed and misrepresented – although women undertake the time-consuming aspects of agricultural work, they often do so without or with scarce pay. Land ownership and tenure security in the Mediterranean displays gendered disparities as well, with succession laws and social customs in effect. FAO's reform framework for agriculture in the region, as highlighted in the May 2018 *Regional Conference for the Near East*, showcases these issues through the "Promoting Food Security, Blue Growth, and Empowerment of Small-Scale Farmers and Women in the MENA region" policy document.

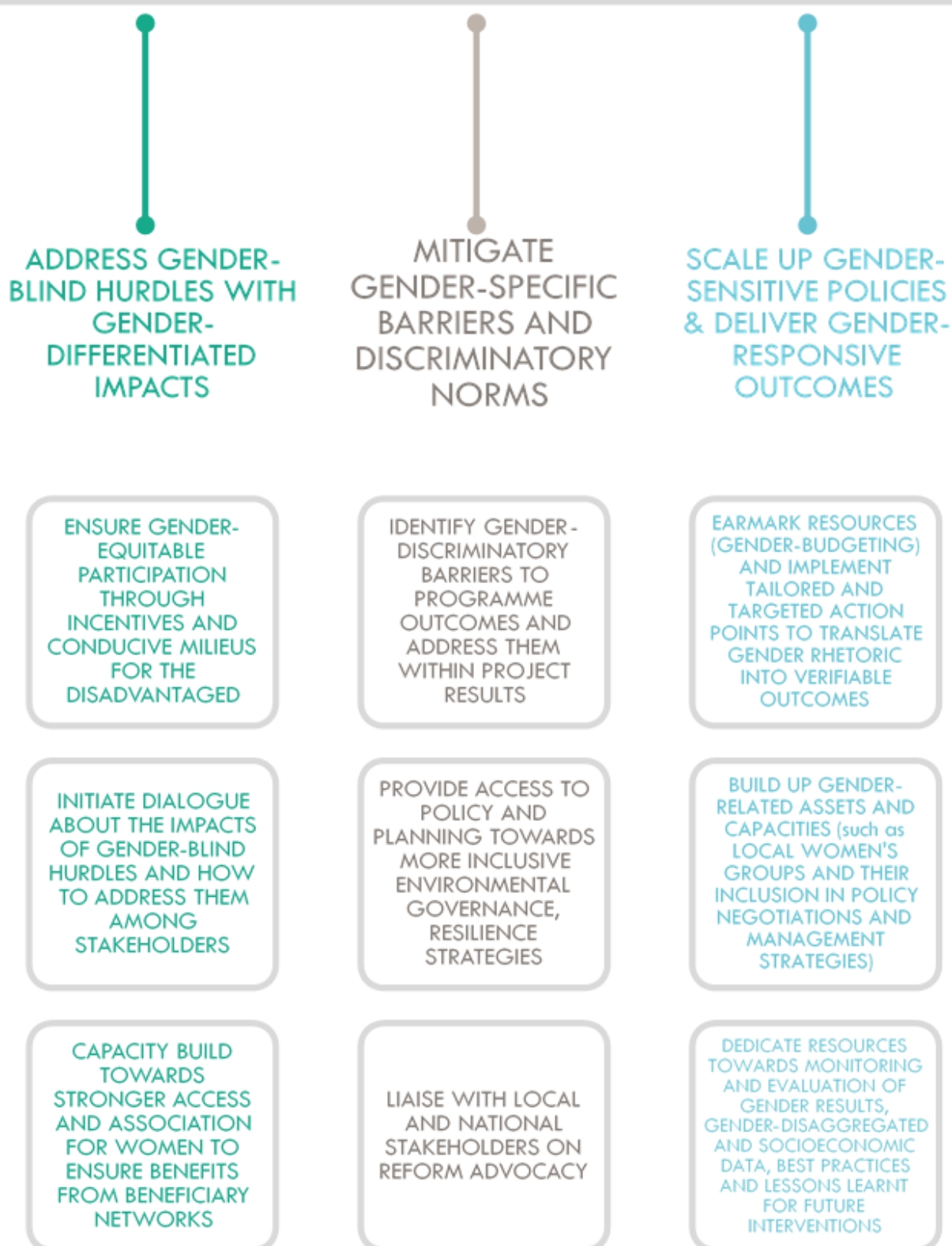
Source: "Mediterranean Women in Rural and Agricultural Communities: Double Jeopardy, Multiple Opportunities". International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies. (2018).

**5.3** *Visualization of the MedProgramme's Gender Strategy*

Based their justification and review of peer examples, this Strategy has identified the following components for the MedProgramme's gender targets, which reflect the types of actions that will be implemented by the Child Projects, visualized below:

*Please see visual from p.14.*

## TARGETS AND COMPONENTS – MEDPROGRAMME GENDER STRATEGY





## 6. Operationalizing the Strategy – the MED Approach

Devising a gender mainstreaming strategy denotes only the very outset of a multi-stage policy cycle that requires consistent efforts of integration and consideration of gender perspectives, in each phase of the program and by all actors involved, to succeed.

To operationalize the Strategy, therefore, three necessary elements ('MED' – 5.1) have to be present and inform the different stages of execution, even if the content changes in real time to adequately meet the necessities of project- and site-specific contexts for the different Child Projects, as described below.

Further, a map (5.2) is presented of how the MED Gender Mainstreaming approach is expected to function.

### 6.1 *Defining the MED Approach*

The approach to be used to operationalize the Strategy is defined below:

#### *a. Multidimensional.*

A multidimensional approach ensures that gender is used as a principal analytical category – however not without context or functioning in a void. Linkages between gender, poverty, environmental justice, socioeconomic inclusion, ethnic diversity and customary practices must be identified, analyzed and considered in the formulation of inclusive environmental action and policy. Child Projects, hence, will have the autonomy to identify gender issues relevant to the project objectives and outcomes (gender assessments), and devise strategic as well as appropriate gender action plans to address these.

#### *b. Empowering*

Integrating empowerment as an operational imperative ensures that program objectives and technical components are geared towards environmental and socioeconomic co-benefits. This is necessary to convert gender-aware rhetoric and gender-responsive analysis into actionable points within project logframes (logical frameworks), and with dedicated resource allocation (gender-budgeting) – which have positive ramifications for the gender status quo in project-specific contexts both nationally and locally. Child Projects, hence, will ensure gender assessments and action plans dovetail with the locale of project activities, stakeholders involved, and ensure budgetary allocations to translate rhetoric towards actions with verifiable results.

#### *c. Durable.*

Durability is the hallmark of a successful strategy/ intervention/project or program. Gender-responsive actions must ensure a shelf life beyond the duration of the project cycle, with positive uptake among national and local stakeholders. Directing investment towards institutional and technical capacity-building, and ensuring ownership of project by stakeholders, will warrant exit strategies for the different Child Projects. Particularly, it will be a program-wide imperative to generate information and data on the linkages between environmental security, climate risks and gender specifically on the Mediterranean region – while, building up capacities of national and local stakeholders to address these in a holistic manner, beyond the duration of the project cycle.

*Please see the visualization of the MED approach – and what it entails for Child Projects and the overall MedProgramme below on p.36.*



Figure 2: The 'MED' Approach –Child Projects and the MedProgramme

(developed by author)

## 6.2 Mapping the Programme-wide MED Approach with Child Projects

Having defined the guiding tenets of Program-wide gender mainstreaming to be devolved for each Child Project, the map (presented as a visual) of how this Strategy will tentatively be operationalized is presented below:

### a. Preparation Phase – Child Projects identify gender priorities and actions through Gender Assessments

The MED approach of this Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the MedProgramme will allow for considerable autonomy, as Child Projects will conduct their own gender assessments. The process of conducting a successful gender assessment includes: identifying the gender directives from the GEF focal point of the Child Project, as well UN Environment's gender priorities with regard to the Child Project thematic; desk-reviews of available literature on the theme from – gender, social development, and political risk perspectives; collating relevant data for the gender considerations from international organizations, development banks, national authorities, and think tanks (economic development-focused); structuring a potential baseline upon which the Child Project can positively impact; and finally, gathering information on relevant gender stakeholders (ministries, independent activist groups, NGOs) and legal mechanisms (gender-progressive laws) who could participate during the implementation phase.

### b. Preparation Phase – Child Projects develop Gender Action Plans based on assessments

The individual gender assessments conducted by each Child Project will form the basis for the development of a tailored and strategic Gender Action Plan, which will mainstream action points to positively impact upon the gender status quo under the broader project objective, outcomes and activities, as well develop means of verification indicators to measure progress to impacts at later stages. This will ensure that Child Projects are able to cater to their specific gender priorities and issues, pertaining to country- and site-specific contexts, and address them in holistic manner through their activities. Further, such an

approach will avoid the perils of establishing a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach for the MedProgramme, and allow for a nuanced and focused mainstreaming effort spanning the different Child Projects.

c. *Inception and Implementation Phase – Child Projects will plan the execution of action points identified in the Action Plans*

Operationalizing the Action Plans will involve meticulous planning, as well as resource allocation. As the Child Projects move into the inception phase and ground realities of project implementation take shape – the execution of the action points with dedicated gender budgeting will guarantee that the gender rhetoric moves towards practical and verifiable results within the broader project objectives and outcomes. The steady maintenance of momentum of gender mainstreaming, at this stage, is very crucial – and, will require concerted efforts from different actors within Child Projects to ensure gender stakeholders are engaged, capacity and consensus are mobilized, and resources are used to target beneficiaries to leverage both socioeconomic and environmental co-benefits.

d. *Throughout the Project Cycle – Child Project 4.1*

This Gender Mainstreaming Strategy, intended to structure gender-responsive activities and to provide a coherent mainstreaming methodology, will be included as one of the three pillars of the Child Project 4.1 – the support project providing also the knowledge management and coordination pillars to the entire MedProgramme. This gives the Child Project 4.1 a unique position: at once, while providing a gender support structure to the pan-MedProgramme portfolio, it will also provide a platform for ‘cross-fertilization’ by pooling in gender-relevant research and data (from the different Child Projects) to facilitate Programme-wide learning and exchange.

e. *Reporting and Monitoring – Child Projects align gender results with indicators/develop gender-specific indicators*

In keeping with the *durability* aspect of the MED approach – it is crucial to ensure a prolonged shelf life of the MedProgramme interventions. A step towards this begins in the inception and implementation phase by building capacity and consensus, while mobilizing adequate resources. Going into the reporting and monitoring stages, it will be important for Child Projects to measure progress to impacts against gender-specific indicators that are developed in the Gender Action Plans (in line with GEF gender indicators), to collate Programme-wide gender information and data, and report accordingly. This will also lay the ground for a potential ‘extension’ of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy through future interventions – by ensuring these can benefit from the gender-responsive actions, policies and capacity building done in the region, and by expanding the entry points these new projects can take with the information and data generated towards cross-cutting issues such as poverty, water access, land and infrastructure etc.

## 7. Conclusion

This Strategy has stipulated the MedProgramme's gender priorities, targets and components, as well as the operationalizing approach towards achieving the same. The focus has been to usher a change and/or reversal perspective and posit a gender equality vision for the MedProgramme that hopes to question established social and gendered categories and implements positive action measures towards gender-responsive actions in the Mediterranean region. In effect, gender mainstreaming is therefore not an end (goal) of the MedProgramme— rather, a means (process) to an end (greater gender equality).

With international consensus, national priorities and organizational efforts (of the GEF and UN Environment – see 1.2) prioritizing gender mainstreaming as a solution to greater stakeholder involvement, improved environmental results and social outcomes of projects, and ensure inclusivity. In this milieu, this Strategy will generate regional cooperation and contribute to the pan-Mediterranean conversation on the importance of greater gender equality for the overall progress of society, improvement of economy and functioning of a healthy polity.