Inclusion of a keyword on 'gender equality' in TOSSD

TOSSD Task Force Issues Paper[1] - Agenda item 7
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Introduction – why enhance tracking of gender equality focus in TOSSD?

1. Gender equality is one of the most prominent issues of the 2030 Agenda and sustainable development more broadly. The SDG framework includes one goal dedicated to gender equality, *SDG 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*, with nine specific targets. Tracking activities targeted towards this policy priority is key for enhanced monitoring, accountability and transparency, and ultimately closing the gender equality gap.

2. In TOSSD, activities contributing to gender equality are identifiable through the "SDG focus" field. **According to TOSSD data for 2021[2], only around 8% of the total volume of cross-border support to TOSSD recipients (and the total number of activities) were assigned SDG 5, either at the target or goal level.** This appears a relatively small proportion and may not fully reflect providers' commitments, intentions and support for closing the gender equality gap. In addition, gender equality being a cross-sectoral policy issue, progress on SDG 5 is interlinked with that of other SDGs, e.g., SDG 3 – Good Health and Wellbeing or SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy. Activities contributing to gender equality may thus have been reported against goals other than SDG 5.

3. This paper first recalls how gender equality relevant activities can be identified in TOSSD (section I). It then proposes options to enhance tracking of gender equality relevant activities in TOSSD through a keyword #GENDER (section II).

I. How can gender equality relevant activities be identified in TOSSD?

4. As mentioned above, TOSSD activities in support of gender equality are identifiable through the "SDG focus" field and by selecting SDG 5. According to the Reporting Instructions[3], for an activity to be marked as SDG 5, it should **directly and significantly** contribute to SDG 5.

5. In addition, in the sector classification, two purpose codes are specifically relevant to activities supporting gender equality:

   - Women's equality organisations and institutions (code 15170)

   - Ending violence against women and girls (code 15180)

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6. **In TOSSD data for 2021,** 86% of activities with the purpose code 15170 and 63% of activities with the purpose code 15180 had been marked SDG 5,[4] while one would expect that all these activities directly and significantly contribute to SDG 5.[5] The question arises therefore whether it would be appropriate to complement the data for these activities with the missing SDGs.

7. **For reporters that submit data both to the CRS and TOSSD**, there is another method for tracking gender equality relevant activities (the gender equality policy marker[6]). According to TOSSD data for reporters that also report to the CRS, only 24% of activities that were marked as significantly contributing to Gender equality (Score = 1) are marked with SDG 5, and 58% of activities that are marked as "principally" contributing to gender equality (Score = 2) were assigned SDG 5.

8. The above suggests **a need to review the data in greater detail and discuss with each reporter the reasons for the seeming incoherence**. The Task Force may want to invite reporters to enhance their consideration of SDG 5 in future TOSSD reporting. Moreover, the *SDG target classifier* (machine learning tool using artificial intelligence) developed by the Secretariat could facilitate the identification of activities supporting SDG 5 and its related targets[7].

II. Would a keyword on 'gender equality' help tracking gender equality relevant support in TOSSD?

9. At the 16th Task Force meeting, members requested the Secretariat to work on a pre-determined keyword **#GENDER.** Pending improved reporting on the SDGs and to ensure more comprehensive data on gender equality in TOSSD, the keyword could be assigned to any gender equality relevant activities whether marked with the SDG focus field, the gender equality purpose codes or, for CRS reporters, the gender policy marker.

10. Using the same mechanism as for existing TOSSD keywords[8], to facilitate the reporting, TOSSD Secretariat would develop the keyword formula that will assign #GENDER keyword for activities that have (uniquely or among others) purpose codes 15170 or 15180, SDG 5 as well as CRS activities that are either marked 1 or 2 with the Gender Equality Policy Marker. Reporters can then check the keyword marking and complement it for additional TOSSD activities.

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[4] The purpose codes 15170 and 15180 are merged with other data in the 'Government and Civil Society' sector, so their gender-relevance is only visible in the micro data, not the data visualisation tool.

[5] Aiming at holding governments accountable for delivering on target 5.2 (eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls); and target 5.3 (eliminating all harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation)

[6] The gender marker uses a 0-1-2 scoring system: Score 0 = Not targeted (the project/programme has been screened against the marker but has not been found to target gender equality); Score 1 = Significant objective (gender equality is an important and deliberate objective, but not the principal reason for undertaking the project/programme; and Score 2 = Principal objective (gender equality is the main objective of the project/programme and is fundamental in its design and expected results; the project/programme would not have been undertaken without this gender equality objective). The marker does not apply to general budget support, core contributions to multilaterals, imputed student costs, debt relief, administrative costs, development awareness, refugee costs in the provider country. The data generated by the marker provide an estimated quantification of support for gender equality, and total amounts of projects/programmes marked 1 and 2 by reporters are counted as gender equality relevant support. See also Handbook-OECD-DAC-Gender-Equality-Policy-Marker.pdf

[7] See Methodology of the SDG artificial intelligence tool and main findings from pilot exercise on 2021 data - paper for discussion under item 3 of this 20th TOSSD Task Force meeting.

[8] #MITIGATION and #ADAPTATION

11. To implement the keyword, **the TOSSD Reporting Instructions** (paragraph 88, Item 10b. Keywords) would need to be updated as follows:

   #GENDER to identify activities aimed at contributing to gender equality and reducing discrimination and inequalities based on sex, as a principal or significant objective.

12. Moreover, the following text would be added to the "Annex 2. Check-list for TOSSD reporting" of the TOSSD explanatory notes (item 10b. Keywords):

   If the keyword #GENDER is used, please make sure to use SDG 5 (goal or target level) in the '10a. SDG focus' field for coherence purposes, and vice versa.

13. The advantage of the above approach would be that it would enable extracting, from TOSSD, data on gender equality pending improved reporting in the SDG focus field. However, in the medium term and in order to align with TOSSD's vision to provide a comprehensive measure of SDG-related investments and support with substantial benefits to TOSSD recipient countries, enhancing the SDG focus reporting will be paramount, most importantly for recipient countries so it can inform their national SDG monitoring and helps identify their priorities for sustainable development finance.

Issues for discussion

- **Does the Task Force agree with establishing a #GENDER keyword to track gender equality relevant TOSSD activities?**

- **Does the Task Force agree with the proposed operationalisation of the #GENDER keyword as described in section II paragraph 10?**

- **Does the Task Force have any comments or suggestions for edits to the proposed texts for the #GENDER keyword in the Reporting Instructions and the Explanatory Notes (Section II, paragraphs 11 and 12)?**

- **What are the Task Force's views on enhancing the SDG focus reporting for more aligned SDG monitoring for both providers and recipient countries (Section II, paragraph 13)?**