

15th Gender Equality Synergy Group Meeting, March 14th 2012

REPORT

The meeting was an excellent opportunity for GED and SIDA as organizers to gather representatives from relevant state institutions, embassies, international and domestic civil society organizations and foundations stressing the topic of gender equality. There were several main topics to discuss, mainly about the current and planned activities of the organisers and donors, but also to audit Terms of Reference for the GESG.

The meeting was chaired by **Mr. Björn Mossberg** (Counselor for Development cooperation, Sida) and **Dr Natalija Mićunović** (Director of Gender Equality Directorate).

Ms. Ana Ilić, representative of Serbian European Integration Office (SEIO), as a speaker, had a presentation named Aid Coordination Group Structure, relevance for donors and IFIs. She has mainly spoke about SEIO and their activities, in particular about SEIO's mechanisms of planning and programming and their activities of monitoring and reporting to EU funds and development assistance. She presented SWAP through two sets of activities: horizontal and sector – level activities. As horizontal activities she has emphasized that is important to define the sectors that will be the carries of sector approach and preparation of comprehensive multi annual strategies for each of them, then to review sector strategies and to ensure linkages between existing national budget frameworks, donor coordination frameworks, public finance management procedures and planning and monitoring mechanisms. In order to establish sector – level cooperation we need a review of sector policies and strategies and identifying a reference strategic document/ plan, preparation of sector budget and its medium term perspective, establishment of functional coordination structures, developing of a sector performance assessment framework (PAF) to monitor the progress. When it comes to aid coordination mechanisms, there are several groups of mechanisms i.e. High level Meeting, Aid Effectiveness Meetings, Sector Working Groups, Aid Coordination Groups.

General recommendation is to formally establish Aid Coordination Groups, develop Rules of Procedures, working towards achieving agreed results.

Serbian European Integration Office has established a consultative process which is based on sectorial civil society organizations (SECO), in order to ensure their participation in planning development assistance, especially programming and use of Instrument for Pre-accession.

Ms. Natalija Mićunović, concluded that gender mainstreaming is a difficult issue, because we don't have clear indicators about what was done so far. She emphasized that we have to include the issue of GE in every segment of future cooperation on all levels and we need to identify the donors thru the Action Plan.

Also, the Government of the Republic of Serbia needs internal coordination when it comes to GE, there is a need of inclusion of gender issue in all new plans of the Government. Monitoring of cross sector issues is always harder, so they need more attention. We have to work in two tracks: first of all, to corporate with donors, and second of all to have connection with our own administration.

Mr. Bjorn Mossberg, introduced us to the **Terms of Reference** for the GESG, so members of the Group could give their remarks concerning the ToR.

Given the specifics of this stage of the reform process, Gender Equality Directorate and SIDA have agreed to reposition the focus of the Gender Equality Synergy Group, in order to make it more instrumental in the implementation of the Action Plan.

Ms. Natalija Mićunović presented Programme for Implementation of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women and Promoting Gender Equality (2010 – 2015) and all present and future activities within the Programme.

Previous discussion was followed by a short introduction of all participants and presentation of activities of their organizations in the field of gender equality.

The following steps were agreed:

1. Revise the ToR in accordance with comments and send the revised version to everyone for opinion,
2. Update the members list