

Trends in donor spending on gender in development

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Top findings

- There is a widening gap in reporting on gender, which has resulted in a clouded picture of whether donor commitments on gender equality are being met. The proportion of official development assistance (ODA) coded with a gender marker has declined from its peak in 2009 (62%) to only 50% in 2012.
- Spending on gender as a proportion of ODA is low. Combined gender-related spending only comprised a fifth (21%) of ODA in 2012, of which only 3% was allocated to projects with a principal contribution to gender. At the other end of the spectrum, the proportion of ODA allocated to projects that do not target gender is higher (30%).
- Germany was the largest donor in terms of volume of combined gender-focussed spending (US\$4.1 billion) in 2012, followed by the UK (US\$4.0 billion) and US (US\$3.6 billion).
- In 2012, just over 70% of combined gender-related ODA went to projects in Africa and Asia. Afghanistan was the top recipient of combined gender-related ODA (US\$1.5 billion), followed by Ethiopia (US\$955 million) and Tanzania (US\$862 million).
- Since 2006, the highest volumes of combined gender-related ODA went to the education, health and governance and security sectors. In 2012, the health sector received the highest volume of combined gender-related ODA (US\$6.3 million), followed by governance and security (US\$5.8 million) and education (US\$4.6 million).

Introduction

At the forthcoming 2014 UN General Assembly (UNGA), governments, donors and civil society will be discussing the way forward for addressing gender inequality and promoting the empowerment of women and girls, including through the post-2015 development agenda. The importance of better data on gender through the Data Revolution will also be at the centre of discussions around this – in terms of data both on the problem (i.e. gender disaggregated data to determine the different needs of women, girls, men and boys) and on all available resources to tackle gender inequality. Better information is critical to ensure resources are targeted in the most effective way and have the greatest impact.

To inform these discussions on gender and data taking place this week at UNGA, this briefing provides an analysis of trends in donor spending on gender in development between 2006 and 2012, including overall trends, top donors, recipients and sectors, and draws upon the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Gender Equality Marker (GEM) categories for reporting expenditure. Data in this briefing was taken from the OECD DAC Credit Reporting System (CRS).

Breakdown of gender categories used

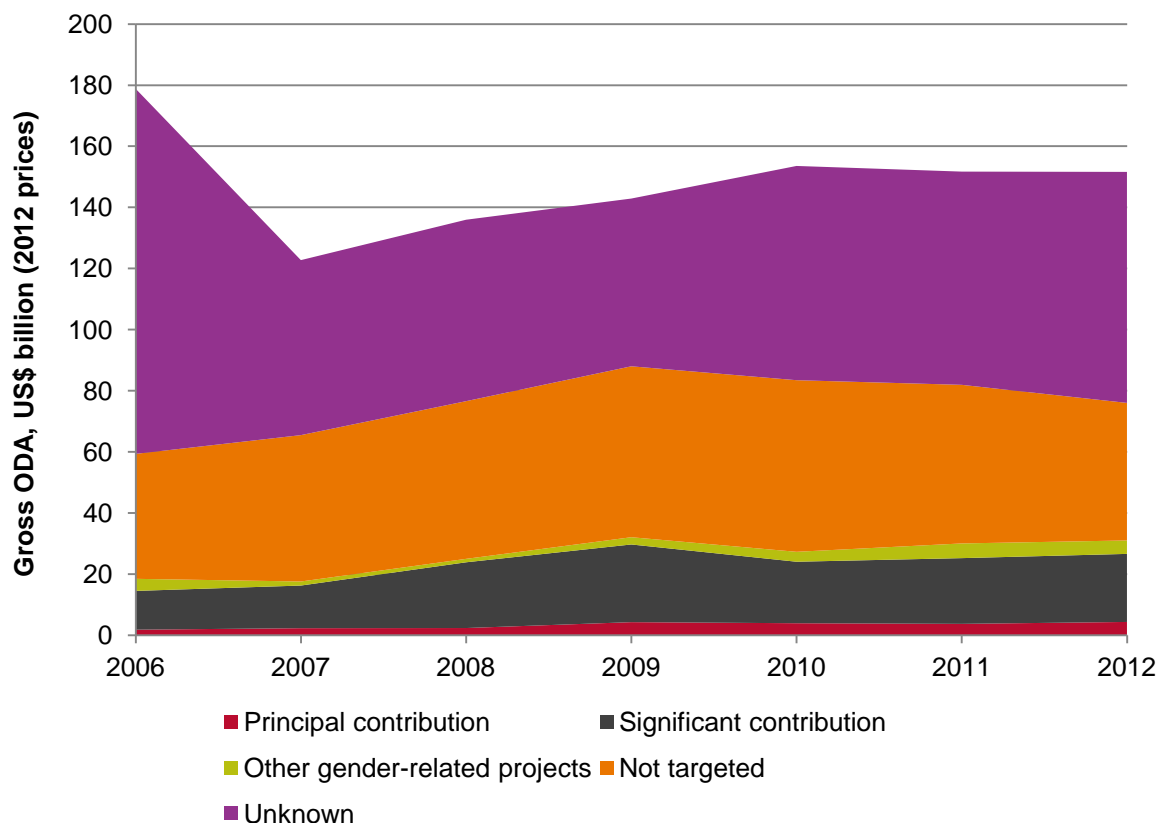
We measured spending on gender using the OECD DAC GEM, as outlined in the below table. We have added an additional category 'other gender-related' (see description).

| OECD DAC GEM | Description |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 0 | Projects that do not target gender |
| 1 | Projects that make a significant contribution to gender equality |
| 2 | Projects that make a principal contribution to gender equality |
| Unknown | Left blank |
| Other gender related | Projects not allocated a gender marker, but have gender-related terms in the project description (e.g. those allocated CRS sector codes for women's equality organisations and institutions, family planning and reproductive health, yet not allocated a specific GEM), suggesting that they do in fact relate to purpose codes 1 or 2. |

To note, the use of the terms 'combined gender-related projects' or 'combined gender-related ODA' in this briefing refer to the combined official development assistance (ODA) spending on projects that make a 'principal' or 'significant' contribution to gender (codes 1 and 2), as well as those categorised as 'other gender-related'.

Gap in reporting on gender is widening, 2006–2012

Figure 1: Trends in gender-related ODA. Source: OECD DAC CRS.



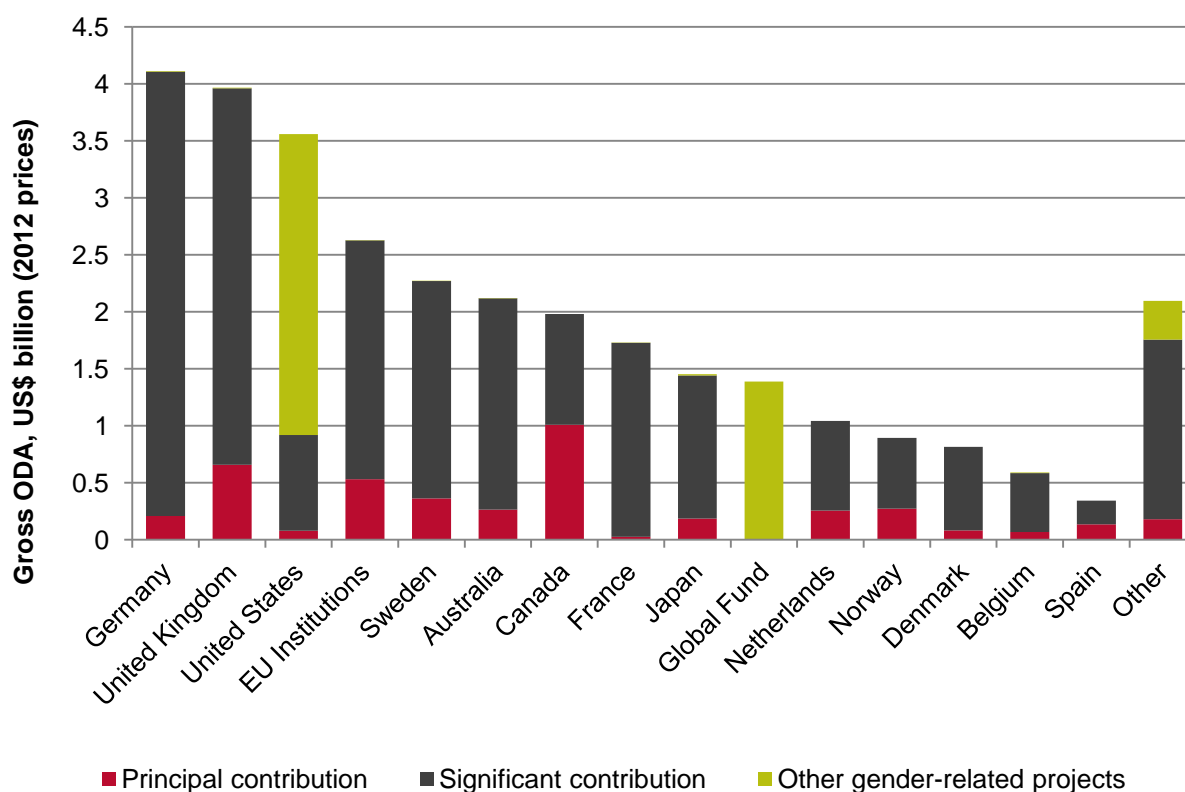
As illustrated in Figure 1, a large proportion of ODA is not coded with a gender marker (i.e. ‘unknown’). The proportion of ODA coded with a gender marker increased from 56% in 2008 when the OECD DAC GEM was introduced, to 62% in 2009. By 2010, however, this had dropped back to 54% and, by 2012, declined even further to 50%. Poor reporting on gender has resulted in an unreliable picture of whether donor commitments on gender equality are being met.

Combined gender-related ODA spiked in 2009 (US\$ 32 billion), fell in 2010 (US\$ 27 billion), and has since gradually increased; in 2012 it almost returned to 2009 levels (US\$ 31 billion). This spike in 2009 runs parallel to an increase in the proportion of ODA coded with a gender marker between 2008 and 2009.

The chart also shows that the proportion of ODA allocated to projects that do not target gender (code 0) is much higher than the proportion allocated to combined gender-related projects. In 2012, just under a third (30%) of ODA was allocated to projects that do not target gender in comparison to just over a fifth (21%) allocated to combined gender-related projects.

Germany was the largest donor to gender in 2012, followed by UK and US

Figure 2: Donor spending on gender. Source: OECD DAC CRS.

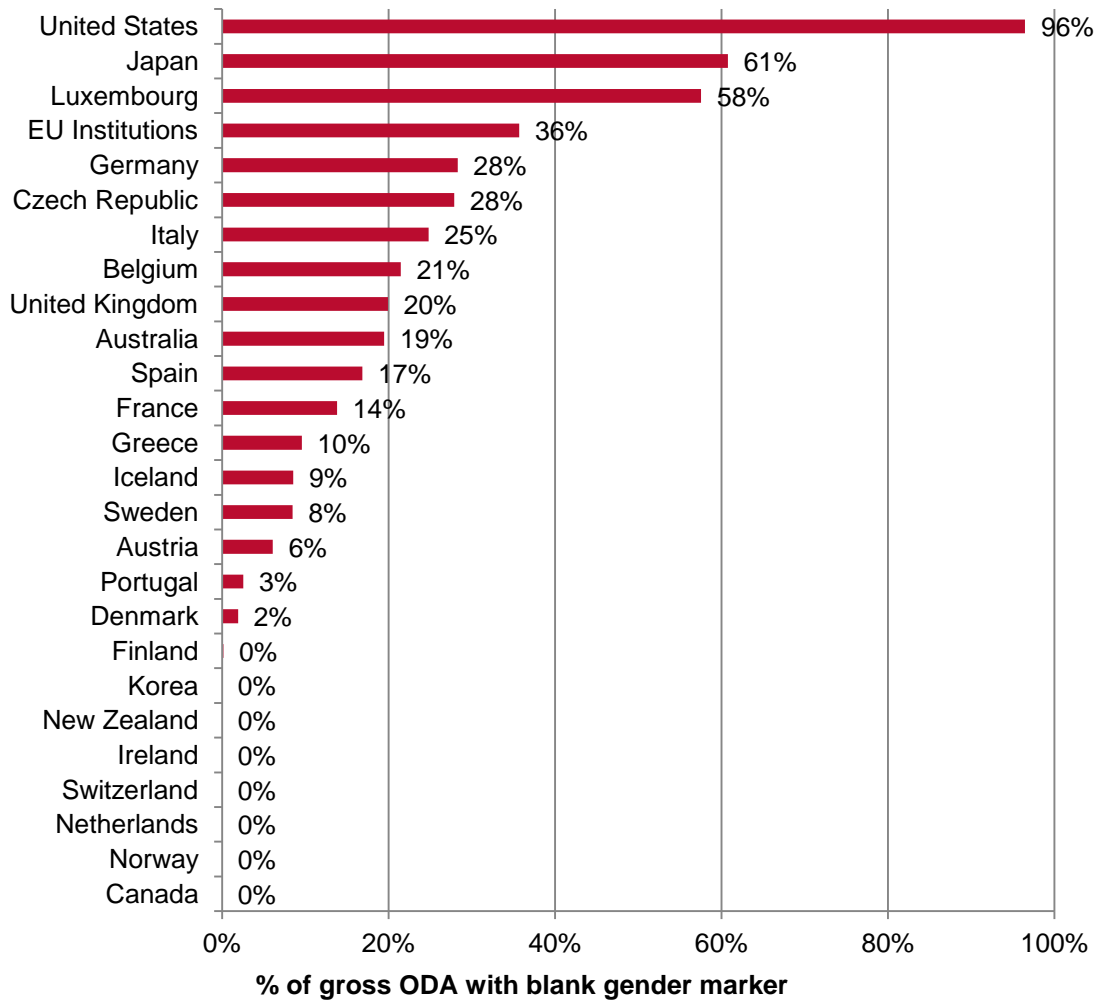


As illustrated in Figure 2, Germany was the largest donor in terms of volume of combined gender-focussed spending in 2012 (US\$4.1 billion), followed by the United Kingdom (UK) (US\$4.0 billion) and the United States (US) (US\$3.6 billion). As shown, the largest proportion of spending by the UK and the US was on projects that make a significant contribution to gender (code 2). Yet for the US, the largest proportion of spending on gender falls into the ‘other gender-related projects’ category, meaning that a large proportion of spending that was gender related (e.g. recorded in CRS codes for women’s equality organisations and institutions, family planning and reproductive health) but not reported as such using the GEM.

In terms of the proportion of ODA spent on combined gender-related projects, the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF) has spent the greatest share of ODA on gender-related projects (74%) in 2012, followed by Iceland (72%) and Greece (66%). Of the larger donors, Sweden has allocated the highest proportion (61%), followed by Canada (48%) and Australia (45%). At the other end of the scale, Japan has allocated the lowest of the larger donors (10%), followed by the US (14%) and EU institutions (15%).

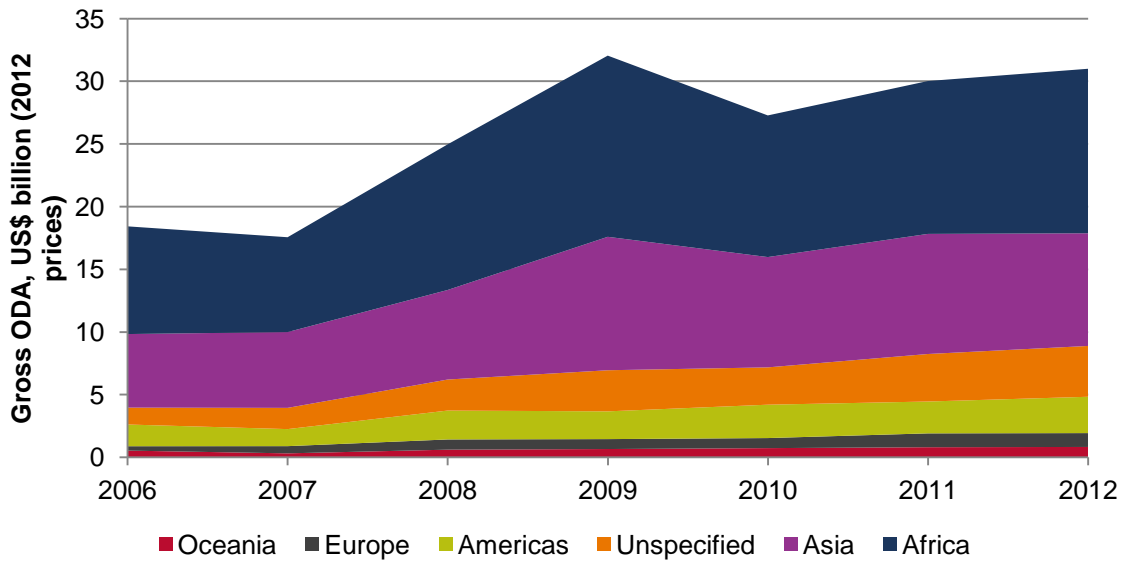
The lower proportional allocation of ODA to combined gender-related projects by these donors is corroborated by their high proportional spending on projects that are left blank and not allocated a code. As illustrated in Figure 3, the majority (96%) of ODA from the US was left blank, as was almost two-thirds of ODA from Japan (61%), and over a third from EU Institutions (36%).

Figure 3: Donor disbursements to projects with a blank gender marker. Source: OECD DAC CRS.



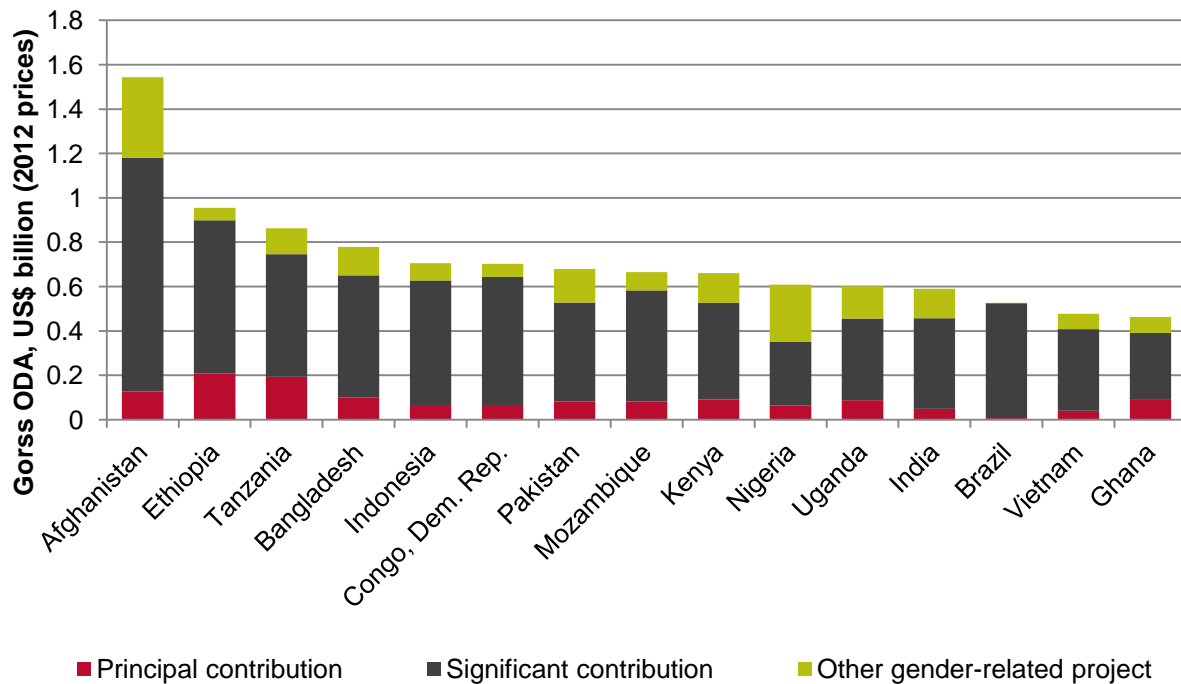
Most funding to gender goes to Africa and Asia

Figure 4: Combined gender-related ODA by region. Source: OECD DAC CRS.



As shown in Figure 4, most combined gender-related ODA goes to Africa and Asia. In 2012, just over 70% of combined gender-related ODA went to projects in these regions.

Figure 5: Top recipients of combined gender-related ODA, 2012. Source: OECD DAC CRS.



As shown in Figure 5, in 2012 Afghanistan was the top recipient of combined gender-related ODA (US\$1.5 billion), followed by Ethiopia (US\$954 million) and Tanzania (US\$862 million). In terms of countries receiving the highest proportion of spending on projects with a principal contribution to gender, the order of top recipients is reshuffled slightly with Ethiopia positioned as the top recipient (US\$207 million) followed by Tanzania (US\$193 million).

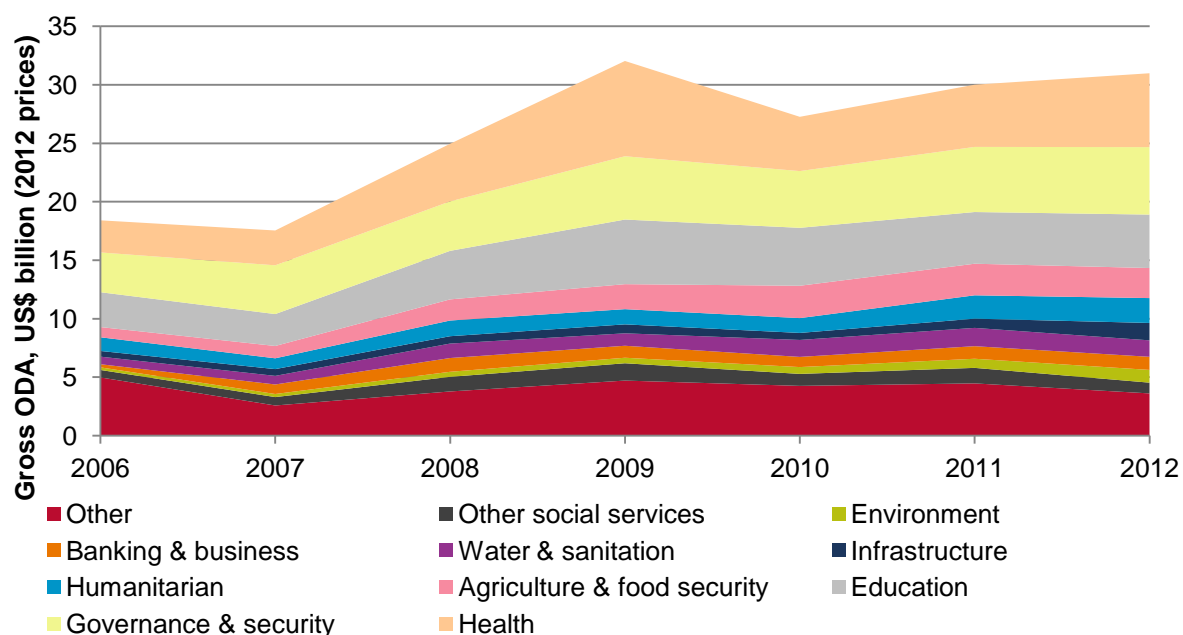
Most countries received the highest proportion of gender-related ODA for projects that make a significant contribution to gender, and a much lower proportion for projects that make a principal contribution or for other gender-related projects.

For some countries, a significant proportion of spending that was gender related (i.e. recorded in CRS codes for women’s equality organisations and institutions, family planning and reproductive health) was not reported as such using the GEM – almost half (45%) in Nigeria and a quarter (24%) in Afghanistan in 2012.

With regards to the proportion of overall ODA received that is gender related, there is wide divergence between countries, ranging from 10% in Vietnam to 36% in Uganda in 2012.

Funding to gender highest in health, governance and security, and education sectors in 2012

Figure 6: Combined gender-related ODA by sector. Source: OECD DAC CRS.



Since 2006, the highest volumes of combined gender-related ODA have been received by the education, health and governance and security sectors (see Figure 6). The order of the top three sectors shifted slightly between 2010 and 2012: governance and security received the highest volume of combined gender-related ODA in 2010 (US\$4.8 billion) and 2011 (US\$5.5 billion); this was replaced by health in 2012 (US\$6.3 billion), followed by governance and security (US\$5.8 billion) and education (US\$4.6 billion).

Funding to women’s equality organisations and institutions is a small but growing share of total ODA

Figure 6: ODA to women’s equality organisations and institutions, volume in US\$ millions and as a share of total ODA. Source: OECD DAC CRS.



Funding to women's equality organisations and institutions is a small but growing share of total ODA, reaching a record US\$481 million in 2012, or 0.3% of total ODA.

The top three donors giving the most ODA to women's equality organisations and institutions are Norway (US\$82 million), followed by the Netherlands (US\$48 million) and Sweden (US\$38 million). The top 3 recipients of ODA to women's equality organisations and institutions are India (US\$ 18 million), Uganda (US\$17 million) and Nepal (US\$13 million).

The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) undertook a survey of over 1,000 women's organizations in 2011, which showed that the median annual income of organisations doubled between 2005 and 2010, reaching US\$20,000.¹ However, most women's rights organisations remain small due to challenges to mobilize resources. They rely on bilateral agencies for 17% of their budget, against 15% from foundations and 10% from individual giving, and 5% from women's trusts. In turn, women's trusts rely on individual giving for 52% of their budgets.

The way forward

The need for better data

This briefing illustrates a widening gap in reporting on gender, as the proportion of ODA coded with a gender marker has declined from its peak in 2009 to only 50% in 2012. It also illustrates inaccurate reporting where a significant proportion of ODA relating to gender (e.g. those allocated CRS codes for women's equality organisations and institutions, family planning and reproductive health) has not been coded with a gender marker. Poor reporting has resulted in a clouded picture of whether donor commitments on gender equality are being met.

A standardised and systematic approach to donor reporting on gender would help to fill this gap in information, strengthen accountability, and enable resources to be better allocated to respond to the different needs of girls and women, as well as men and boys.

Generating gender-disaggregated data is a key part of wider action to deliver on the Data Revolution as called for in the report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

High-level political attention on gender equality is critical and will lead to determined action by donors, governments, law-enforcement agencies and civil society. Ensuring that adequate funding is in place is a crucial part of addressing gender inequality, which is a prerequisite for promoting development and ending poverty.

The need to mobilise more and ALL available resources

Spending on gender as a proportion of overall ODA is surprisingly low given the international attention the issue has received and the number of international and national commitments in place to mainstream gender equality across all development.² As a solid outcome of the post-2015 development agenda, all donors need to set clear and measurable funding targets for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. All available resources must be mobilised – including international and domestic (where possible), public and private.

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¹ Association for Women's Rights in International Development (2013) Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots: the status of financing for women's rights organising and gender equality, www.awid.org/Library/Watering-the-Leaves-Starving-the-Roots

² Examples include the Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development (2012); Millennium Development Goals (Goal 3), and UK government International Development (Gender Equality) Act (2014)).