

Gender Budgeting

Tool 5: Defining partnerships and multilevel governance – identifying relevant partners, the role of gender experts and the composition of monitoring committees

This tool can be used by managing authorities to ensure:

- that relevant actors, especially those with gender expertise, are included in EU Funds' programming and monitoring processes;
- that all organisations involved in the design and implementation of EU Funds' programmes integrate gender analysis in their practice.

EU Funds' partners guide programming and implementation, supervise programme performance, and approve project selection criteria and evaluation plans. Their role is to ensure the quality of EU Funds' processes, as well as alignment with the EU's and Member States' overarching goals (CPR, Article 6). Relevant partners are specifically meant to be represented on EU Funds' monitoring committees (CPR, Article 34). For the post-2020 period, the Commission proposes "to give a more prominent role to the monitoring committees in supervising the programme performance and all the factors influencing this" (CPR, Explanatory Memorandum).

Including actors relevant from a gender perspective, particularly those with expertise, in multi-level governance is important for several reasons.

Involving gender-relevant partners from an intervention's **planning** phrase through to the **evaluation phase** makes it possible to identify gender-specific concerns and implications that may not have been considered initially. Such partners and partnerships play an important role in **improving public decisions and policies** to address current complex, multidimensional problems. This is especially relevant to gender inequality; addressing this requires an in-depth understanding of the impacts of social norms, values, rationality and social behaviour.

Stakeholders and beneficiaries, both women and men, may be affected differently by public policy and programme decisions. They may have different priorities and perspectives on the allocation of resources. Ensuring a gendered perspective in programme analysis, and gender balance in stakeholder engagement, gives us a broader perspective and stronger understanding of women's and men's diverse lived realities.

Partnerships with experts can build capacities for gender analysis, while strengthening understandings of the gendered dimensions of programme implementation and project design. Dialogue with partners is also vital for **identifying potential corrective or additional actions** within programmes and projects. This can be pursued through consultations with civil society organisations working on gender equality, and with relevant state bodies responsible for promoting gender equality.

Diverse representation also contributes to **awareness raising and capacity development** on gender equality for all those involved. This is achieved by creating opportunities for gender-relevant partners and policymakers to exchange experiences and information on gender mainstreaming, equality and inequalities in various policy areas. This fosters mutual learning, enrichment and better results thanks to the inputs of partners with expert knowledge of gender-related issues. Sustained, meaningful interaction between policy-makers and such stakeholders creates space for improved transparency and trust. This, in turn, can lead to greater commitment to applying gender equality principles.

Gender-relevant partners, such as women's organisations and gender experts, **enhance accountability on gender equality commitments**. They act as 'control towers', watching over public policy processes in order to ensure that governments fulfil their commitments to gender equality objectives, and are held accountable for these commitments.