

Gender-sensitive Parliaments

Domain 2 – Gender mainstreaming in laws

This domain focuses on gender mainstreaming in laws, such as using gender impact assessment (GIA). Gender issues should be taken into consideration during the entire legislative process and the impact of the law should also be assessed for gender impact.

A gender-sensitive parliament mainstreams gender equality in the process of drafting legislation. Methods for ensuring that a gender perspective is included in legislative work include:

Gender analysis using **sex-disaggregated data**. Gender analysis implies understanding the different positions of women and men in the context of a specific topic and the different impacts of a policy or law on those positions. The empirical basis for gender analysis is the systematic collection and use of sex-disaggregated data.

Gender Impact Assessment (GIA). GIA is an *ex ante* evaluation, analysis or assessment of a law, policy or programme that makes it possible to estimate the likelihood that a given decision will have positive, negative or neutral consequences for the state of equality between women and men. The central question of the GIA is whether a law, policy or programme reduces, maintains or increases the gender inequalities between women and men.

Even though all signatory states of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) are required to ‘ensure that before policy decisions are taken, an analysis of their impact on women and men is carried out (section 204(a))’, most countries do not ordinarily apply GIA to their legislative process (Barnes and Munn-Rivard: 2012).