

# THE POWER OF 4 BILLION

## INCLUSIVE AGENDAS FOR WOMEN & YOUTH



## CONCEPT NOTE

### Session 3:

#### **GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN FRAGILE AND CONFLICT AFFECTED CONTEXTS**

Empowering women can lead to more peaceful societies. In fact, peacebuilding and state-building can provide opportunities to advance the recognition of women's rights. When women are meaningful participants in peace negotiations and constitutional reform processes, the likelihood that an agreement will be reached and implemented increases. On the other hand, cultural gender norms that associate "being a man" with domination and aggression can fuel conflict, motivating men and boys to participate in violence. Moreover, conflict and fragility threaten women and girls' ability to participate in the workforce, advance their education, and otherwise contribute to society. Strengthening gender equality in fragile situations is therefore critical for achieving the SDGs.

The priority given to gender equality in countries affected by conflict and fragility is higher than in other developing countries. In 2014-2015, 36% of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members' official development assistance (ODA) targeted gender equality in these contexts.

Recent OECD research shows that policies in fragile states need to address the root causes of gender inequalities, conflict and fragility, and the full range of connections between them. Governments and development partners need a more strategic and informed approach to fragile and conflict-affected settings and a better understanding of the role of social norms.

#### **Questions**

- How can the participation of women in peace processes and state-building efforts change outcomes?
- How can we implement development co-operation policies that are effective in challenging negative social norms that maintain gender inequalities, while respecting local contexts?
- What are innovative ways of engaging men in policies to promote universal gender equality in fragile or conflict situations?

