

Supporting gender equality on every continent: the EU Bank at European Development Days #SheisWe

- EIB gives the floor at #EDD18 to partners and projects enhancing gender equality and female economic empowerment around the world.
- Senior EIB experts to debate how the new EIB Group Gender Strategy “Protect, Impact, Invest” can move the rights of women and girls to the heart of activities
- Latest figures on development impact of EIB activities outside the EU to be announced.

Partners and project beneficiaries from around the world will join EIB experts and senior representatives this year at the European Development Days (EDD) organised by the European Commission on June 5 and 6, to reflect on how the EU Bank, as the world’s largest multilateral lender, can support the agenda ‘Women and Girls at the Forefront of Sustainable Development: protect, empower, invest’. The EIB delegation will be joining and hosting a series of debates to contribute to the gender balance agenda and explore solutions to further boost economic inclusion and female economic empowerment in development activities.

Last year the EIB group financed EUR 78.2bn of projects, among which EUR 7.9bn were outside the EU with EUR 19bn directed at climate action. With its new Gender Strategy and Action Plan, the EU Bank aims to apply a gender lens to all its activities. The EIB will hold a number of policy sessions and project presentations at its special **stand 73** where beneficiaries and experts will be available for interview.

Ahead of the event, Ambroise Fayolle, EIB Vice-President notably in charge of Development, said: *“The European Development Days are rightly putting gender at the centre of their debates this year. Tackling the challenges limiting women’s potential is indeed key to boost development and to fight poverty globally. This is also a core European value to which the EIB is committed. But not only this – quite simply supporting female entrepreneurship and promoting the economic empowerment of women is smart economics. I look forward to discussing this fundamental issue with African Heads of States on this occasion”*.

More information:

EIB Gender Strategy and Action Plan

To improve the impact of its activities on women and girls, in December 2016 the EIB Group adopted a [Strategy on Gender Equality and Women’s Economic Empowerment](#). Titled “Protect, Impact, Invest”, this Strategy and related Action Plan, approved earlier this year, will guide the Group to further contribute to the 2030 Agenda on the whole and, more specifically to the

Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDGs) aiming to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” by 2030.

Equality between women and men is a matter of fundamental values and human rights, enshrined in International Law, the European Union’s (EU) treaties and legislation, including that of Member States. Whilst inequality can affect both sexes, evidence shows that women and girls are overwhelmingly more exposed to gender-based discrimination and violence in every part of the world, be it in the domestic, professional, public and/or political sphere. Outside the European Union, gender inequality is often exacerbated by poverty, ingrained social norms, unconscious bias, discriminatory legal frameworks, as well as conflicts and socio-economic fragility. Women and girls have little access to, or control over, productive resources, they suffer unequal education levels, poor labour force participation in quality jobs, financial and digital exclusion, and inadequate maternal and reproductive health.

Such gender inequality can generate significant costs. In Europe, for example, the gender employment gap is equivalent to an overall loss to the economy estimated at around €370 billion, or 2.8% of the EU’s annual GDP. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, advancing women’s equality could add between USD12-28 trillion to global GDP by 2025.

The EIB outside the EU: Financing with global impact

At the EDDs, the EIB will share the latest impact figures of its financing outside the EU. Last year, the EU Bank signed 100 new projects, with EUR 7.2bn. of lending.

In turn, this supports some EUR 29bn of investment in total, resulting in:

- 17 million women and men will benefit from safer water supply and improved sanitation
- 6 million homes will be supplied with electricity from clean and renewable sources
- 542 000 jobs in micro-enterprises and smaller businesses will be supported via better access to finance, thus enabling the creation of more jobs and the expansion of their outreach especially to women and girls.

[The EIB outside the EU – 2017: Financing with global impact](#) (report available on 5th of June)

The EIB at the EDD 2018: highlights and events

The full schedule of EIB participation at #EDD18 is available [here](#)

EIB senior representatives, experts, project partners and beneficiaries available for interview at EDDs – see press contacts

- Ambroise Fayolle, EIB Vice-President responsible for Development
- Jonathan Taylor, EIB Vice-President responsible for Environment and Climate Action

- Maria Shaw Barragan, EIB Director of Global Partners Department
- Monica Scatasta, Head of Environment, Climate and Social Policy
- Eleni Kyrou, EIB Lead Social Development & Gender Specialist
- Aglaé Touchard le Drian, EIB Senior Investment Manager, Global Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Fund (GEEREF)
- María Inés Zigarán, Minister of Environment of the Province of Jujuy, Argentina
- Tammy Newmark, CEO & Managing Partner, EcoEnterprises Fund
- Annicent Busingye, Operations & Maintenance Director, Frontier Energy
- Madeleine Rees, OBE, Secretary General Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
- Yrenilsa Lopez, Principal Investment Officer and Portfolio Manager, Women's World Banking Asset Management
- Joan Carling, Co-convenor of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group for Sustainable Development and Board member of the International Network of Indigenous Women

[The EIB gender equality initiatives](#)

[The EIB at the EU Dev Days 2018](#)