



The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development

Women's Entrepreneurship Development Working Group (WEDWG) Minutes
Helsinki, Finland, 9 April 2014

25 April 2014

Participants

Louise Anten, Netherlands MFA

Esther Dassanou, IFC

Virginia Rose-Losada, ILO

Marie Sicat, UNCTAD

Erin Markel, consultant (part of meeting, by phone)

Joni Simpson, ILO (Chair)

Mika Vehnämäki, Finland MFA

Jim Tanburn, Eleanor Bell, Secretariat

Apologies Christina Rosendahl, GIZ

The Annex at the end of this document summarises the main action points agreed during the meeting.

Welcome remarks, review of agenda

Mika welcomed the group to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland; participants noted the success of the seminar on women's inclusion in business the previous day. Joni Simpson thanked Finland MFA for hosting the meeting and outlined the agenda.

Member Agency and DCED Updates

UNCTAD has launched a new publication in collaboration with ILO entitled, '[Empowering Women Entrepreneurs through Information and Communications Technologies: A Practical Guide](#)', which provides a foundation for the role of ICTs in the empowerment of women entrepreneurs and considers ICTs in each aspect of the ILO Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED) framework. An electronic version of the publication is available at:

<http://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=875>

UNCTAD's next edition of the Information Economy Report, an UNCTAD flagship publication, will focus on e-commerce, including women-owned SMEs and e-commerce. As this report will address how e-commerce is impacting on SMEs and women-owned businesses, UNCTAD would welcome from DCED members any best practices, case studies or other information and reports on e-retailers and SMEs in e-commerce.

IFC are looking at specific gaps in women's access to finance. A new study compares banks who have not yet worked with women with those who do, and concludes that women are a profitable market to invest in. The IFC's current work includes developing immediately practicable tips to offer female entrepreneurs. The IFC Gender Secretariat is also starting to look beyond finance and business development services to the extractives and agribusiness sectors and ICT.

The **Netherlands MFA** has commissioned an independent evaluation of the PSD instruments it has employed since 2005, which is soon to be published. The Netherlands MFA has launched a new flagship project, the Dutch Good Growth Fund, which looks for synergies between aid and trade. It will offer various forms of financing for investments in, and trade with Small and Medium Enterprises in low- and middle-income countries. Investments benefiting female, young or fragile-state entrepreneurs are being encouraged. Information will be published [here](#) as it becomes available. The second phase of the Netherlands MFA work on PPPs in food security and PSD is being prepared, and will pay greater attention to women entrepreneurs. Information on the Netherlands MFA 'Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women' (FLOW) program, which offers funding for women's organizations, can be found [here](#).

Christina Rosendahl had previously sent the following update to the group: **BMZ** is currently working on a new Gender Action Plan; the previous Action Plan ran from 2009 to 2012 and was evaluated in 2013. WEE was one of the 4 focus areas, the others being women in armed conflicts, women and climate change, and sexual and reproductive health and rights of women. BMZ is also revising its Gender Equality Concept. BMZ and the EU are cooperating on a new WED project in Tajikistan, which includes capacity development of a Women's Business Association and producing a women's business incubator. A **BMZ/GIZ** project in the MENA region has published a manual [The "Why, What and How" of gender sensitive value chains: A Practical Guide](#). Sharing experience with other agencies on gender-sensitive value chain development would be greatly appreciated. BMZ/GIZ is starting to undertake work on gender-sensitive micro-insurance products and regulation. BMZ/GIZ is also considering conducting a study on the impacts of a project targeting microfinance for women in Uganda on social empowerment.

The **ILO** is conducting a randomised controlled trial in Kenya, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to measure the effectiveness of instruments currently being used to train female entrepreneurs. First results will be available in July. 3 WED country assessments are about to be released, providing a list of key recommendations for policy-makers, development partners and key stakeholders to grow WED in a specific country. 'What is working in WED', a report reviewing the work of the ILO and other organisations, will be published in May. The question of involving men in WED and informal to formal economy transition will be addressed in forthcoming policy briefs, and input to this is very welcome. A 'tool kit' combining WED policy and capacity building tools will also be published later in the year. ILO is partnering on an upcoming African Women's Economic Summit in Lusaka, Zambia in July, with AfDB and NFNV.

Finland MFA has produced guidelines on the Finnish development cooperation in fragile states and situations; while protecting and supporting women is a cross-cutting objective of all cooperation activities, private sector development is strongly addressed in the guidelines. Finland's innovation programmes concentrate on women entrepreneurs, notably through partnerships in Vietnam and Southern Africa. Similarly, some of the ILO-led programs, such as Green Jobs in Zambia and Decent Work in Egypt and Tunisia, work explicitly with women entrepreneurs. Women's World Banking is Finland's primary partner in women's inclusive finance. The MFA and the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation are together establishing new innovations for the MFA's development programme.

The **DCED** Second Global [Seminar on Results Measurement](#) was held in March 2014. Measuring the WEE impact of interventions was a key theme of discussion at the Seminar; other popular themes included systemic change, attribution and job creation. The DCED is currently working to produce guidance on these themes. The DCED 2014 Annual Meeting will be held in July in Geneva, and the topic of the 'thematic day' will be job creation.

Update on the WEDWG Work Plan

A [scoping study on agency WED activities](#) was completed in October 2012, and subsequently a [literature review on household level indicators](#) was completed in September 2013. The current work plan item is intended to build upon this, looking at how to measure impacts at the household level; two programmes using the DCED Standard are being taken as examples. At the previous meeting, it was felt that there are significant challenges in identifying one key WED indicator. As such, this work item will focus on identifying a menu of indicators for programmes to select from, and offer suggestions on using them.

Presentation of preliminary findings from Erin Markel on measuring impacts at the household level

Erin Markel presented her preliminary findings on how to measure WEE impact at the household level. The presentation was based largely on her field visit to one of the programmes, [Making](#)

[Markets Work for the Chars](#) (M4C) in Bangladesh. Key challenges faced by M4C were outlined, along with preliminary findings suggesting potential ways to address them. The final presentation will be submitted on the 14th May 2014, following the visit to the second programme, in Georgia.

Next steps

The WEDWG agreed that an analysis of the benefits of following the measurement guidelines produced by this work item, in comparison to the costs it would incur, would be a useful addition. It was proposed that this could take the form of a brief annex. It was also agreed that a summary report, condensing the guidance into a few pages, would be helpful. The logistics of co-ordinating these additions before the Annual Meeting in July will be investigated. More broadly, it was agreed that monitoring and results measurement of WEE was an area in which the WEDWG can add significant value. Additional work items expanding the scope of this work will be proposed as a major part of the next year's work plan. Potential suggestions included case studies of projects working in other sectors or geographical areas.

An additional proposition for the next work plan was the production of advocacy documents to aid practitioners in demonstrating the economic and business cases for WEE. It was, however, noted that such advocacy documents may need to be sector specific to add value, and that this would thus be a significant undertaking.

Annex: Summary of Action Points Agreed

	What?	By Whom?	By When?
1.	Research possibility of extension of mandate for work item on measuring household indicators	Joni Simpson/IFC	Asap
2.	Share Erin's final presentation with the WG	Eleanor Bell	May 15 th
3.	Inform WG if intending to join the DCED Annual Meeting in Geneva, 8-10 July	WG members	Asap