



The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development

Women's Economic Empowerment Working Group (WEEWG)

Minutes of Teleconference, 9 April 2019

17 April 2019

Participants

- Nathalie Wyser (SDC) – Co-Chair
- Sebastian Gilcher (GIZ) – Co-Chair
- Selina Haeny (SDC)
- Lisanne Van Beek (NL RVO)
- Irma Keijzer (NL MoFA)
- Gillian Dowie (IDRC)
- François-Philippe Dube and Marc Blanchette (Global Affairs Canada)
- Jim Tanburn and Lucrecia Bertelli (DCED Secretariat)

Apologies

- Charleine Mbuyi Lusamba (ILO)
- Maaïke Hofman (NL MoFA)

Agency updates

- Nathalie Wyser (SDC) talked about two [SDC's Thematic Networks](#) that will have their face-to-face events during April-May 2019: [Gender Equality](#), and [Employment and Income](#). The main focus of the events is on how to obtain impact at scale. Regarding the [Gender Equality SDC Network](#), Selina Haeny (SDC) added that they will be looking into how to become transformative with SDC's work on gender and WEE. The WEE events will discuss two main topics: vocational skills development and financial inclusion. Moreover, SDC has recently launched a guidance sheet on women's financial inclusion and two status reports, one on gender equality and another on WEE; all these documents will be shared once finalised.
- Gillian Dowie (IDRC) shared that IDRC is currently commissioning around 5 papers on areas relevant to WEE that came up from the [GrOW programme](#) (which ended last year). The studies will look at models of care provision in low-income contexts for scalability, redistribution of care within the household and the role of informal collectives (i.e. informal unions, cooperatives, etc.), focusing on informality and a transformative approach towards WEE. IDRC is also developing their strategic plan for this year.
- Lisanne Van Beek (NL RVO) talked about their recently published internal guidelines, meant for RVO Project Advisors to integrate gender as early as possible within their projects' cycle. RVO has recently started a study on men's engagement in WEE and they are contacting different agencies to analyse their experiences (so far, GIZ and Africa Gender Innovation Lab but looking for others). On this year's International Women's Day, they launched the English version of their [yearly magazine](#) which includes best practices on WEE in RVO's projects. From The Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Irma Keijzer said that they are working on integrating gender in trade. In particular, they are exploring possible strategies in terms of integrating gender trade agreements. Together with RVO, they are working on generating

gender-integrated data and on monitoring female entrepreneurship in the Netherlands to explore the division of labour and women's access to MoFA programmes.

- François-Philippe Dube and Marc Blanchette (Global Affairs Canada) commented that they have a new policy statement on inclusive growth but it has not been approved yet. They have also started a policy statement on WEE and they will probably have updates for the next working group meeting.
- Sebastian Gilcher (GIZ) said that GIZ has recently launched a new gender strategy. With that in mind, GIZ is working on having more gender focal points, gender-related skills development within GIZ, and more gender-focused projects in the field (e.g. on peace building and PSD).

Work item on WEE Practitioners' Workshop

The aim of this workshop is to share tools and lessons-learned, as well as to position the DCED and the working group in the field.

The workshop will be held before the DCED Annual Meeting in Vienna, on Wednesday 12th June, after the WEEWG meeting. The workshop will be open to other DCED members and, depending on room capacity and logistics, to other Private Sector Development (PSD) Partners. The preferred format will be a keynote speech followed by an open discussion (fishbowl method). After the presentations, there will be a networking event with a small reception (to be confirmed).

Helen Bradbury has confirmed her participation as a speaker for the WEE Practitioners Workshop (Wednesday 12 June, Vienna). Helen is the Team Leader of Alliances Caucasus Programme at Mercy Corps. She is also a trainer of 'Making Markets work' training with the Springfield centre with a strong interest in operationalising good practices in results measurement, gender and WEE across projects. She wrote [How to put Gender and WEE into practice in M4P](#) for the DCED, in 2016.

Lisanne Van Beek (NL RVO) suggested contacting speakers from Marel Iceland and Plan International. The Task Team is open to suggestions on additional speakers.

Action item: the Task Team will have a call next week to discuss the final agenda, proposed speakers and next steps. The DCED Secretariat will check if there is a bigger room available to open the invitation to other PSD partners.

Work item on a Women Economic Empowerment and Green Growth

The work plan of the working group includes a joint work item with the Green Growth Working Group (GGWG) that looks at the possibilities to better include WEE in Green Growth projects and vice-versa.

The task team, composed of UNIDO, UNDP, SECO and GIZ, has decided to develop a practical guidance paper with case studies. The ToRs were shared for comments with all working group members. GIZ is currently in the process of selecting a consultant. GIZ will be financing this item directly on behalf of DCED.

During this discussion, Selina Haeny (SDC) commented on the difficulty to get recommendations for WEE consultants and the lack of a specialised consultants' roster. In reply, Sebastian Gilcher (GIZ) shared the [GIZ consultants' database](#).

Action item: Steffen Felix (GIZ, DCED GGWG) is the task manager and will be updating the group on the consultants' selection process; the contracting process will be under GIZ. The task team plans to show initial findings at the DCED Annual Meeting.

Work item on Unpaid Care Work

This work item aims to look at the specificities that SMEs face within the care economy and outline their opportunities and challenges. There are currently no updates.

Action item: the WEEWG chairs, with the support of the Secretariat, will contact IFC to decide if this work item will move forward or not.

Work Plan 2019-2020

For the Work Plan 2019-2020, to be submitted to the DCED ExCo by the end of April, the WEEWG has to decide on possible work items. The group has talked about focusing on publicising the work done for the Work Plan 2018-2019, for instance through webinar series. Examples of DCED webinars from other working groups can be found [here](#). WEEWG members still have time to suggest other possible work items.

Action item: the WEEWG Chairs will be receiving proposals on new work items and task team volunteers until Wednesday 17 April 2019.

AOB

- Among the meeting's participants, Lisanne Van Beek (NL RVO), Sebastian Gilcher (GIZ), Selina Haeny (SDC) and Nathalie Wyser (SDC) confirmed their participation in the DCED Annual Meeting. Irma Keijzer (NL MoFA), Gillian Dowie (IDRC), François-Philippe Dube and Marc Blanchette (Global Affairs Canada) plan to attend but they are waiting for approval. **Action item, the WEEWG Chairs, with the support of the Secretariat, will follow-up on agencies' participation in the next WEEWG meeting and the WEE Practitioners Workshop (DCED Annual Meeting, 11-14 June, Vienna).**