



The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development

Women's Economic Empowerment Working Group (WEEWG)

Minutes of Meeting, The Hague, 28 November 2019

13 January 2020

Participants

In person

- Nathalie Wyser (SDC) – Co-Chair
- Charleine Mbuyi-Lusamba (ILO)
- Gisela Strand (Sida)
- Irma Keijzer (NL MoFA)
- Lianne van Beek (NL RVO)
- Maaïke Hofman (NL MoFA)
- Sindy Karberg-Manuel (GIZ/BMZ)
- Amy Rice (DCED Secretariat)
- Jim Tanburn (DCED Secretariat)

Online

- Gillian Dowie (IDRC)
- Nicolas Schmidt (UNIDO)
- Reneta Lambreva (Global Affairs Canada)
- Selina Haeny (SDC)
- Sophie von Wartburg (SDC)

Welcome

Nathalie Wyser (SDC) welcomed all participants to the meeting. She passed on greetings from co-chair Sebastian Gilcher (GIZ/BMZ) who, due to illness, was unfortunately unable to join, and thanked members who had participated in the Open Space the previous day for valuable discussion.

Agency updates

- **Charleine Mbuyi-Lusamba:** ILO is working on a new initiative to be piloted in 2020, on women's entrepreneurship in Tunisia, and graduating women in small-scale businesses in Somalia. The focus is on growth-oriented business. The ILO is also conducting research into cross-value addition and factors that attract and retain female entrepreneurs. ILO is also developing tools for integrating gender into programmes using an edutainment approach.
- **Lianne van Beek:** RVO is continuing their efforts to integrate gender into all aspects of the programme and project cycle, and has developed an internal guide on gender and

M&E. The guide provides key questions for a gender (sensitive) analysis. RVO is seeking to link up more with local women's business associations, particularly in project design, and is raising awareness of gender-based violence. They will organise a seminar with Oxfam Novib in January, to learn from the best practices after the #metoo incident.

- **Maaïke Hofman: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands** is doing much work on gender mainstreaming and is also looking at gender-based violence, peace and security, and WEE. Its WEE programmes are related to youth advocacy and to climate-smart solutions for women farmers. It also has a pilot project in Kenya focused on integrating a gender lens into responsible business conduct/due diligence (working towards sustainable value chains). In early December the NL MoFA will launch a new policy framework that gives scope to begin up to seven new programmes.
- **Irma Keijzer: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands** also has a focus on supporting women in the informal sector to become entrepreneurs and on e-commerce.
- **Sindy Karberg-Manuel:** Germany's third Gender Action Plan has been put on hold until BMZ's Agenda 2030 is finalised. **GIZ** has developed guidelines for gender policy markers to be used by implementing agencies, and is designing hands-on training tools for the inclusion of gender transversally throughout the implementation of PSD projects. It has some pilot projects focused on tech start-ups underway in Africa and expects to have learnings by early 2020.
- **Gisela Strand: Sida** is finalising a new Gender Equality plan and different gender tools are being updated. Gender equality is a priority. According to the OECD DAC peer review, 87% of Sida's bilateral allocable aid had gender equality and women's empowerment as a principal or significant objective in 2017. Africa Department conducted an internal review of 20 projects in economic sectors to compare with a similar review conducted in 2014 on how well the projects score on gender equality. The review shows that there is some improvement but there are still challenges with gender mainstreaming throughout the project cycle. Many projects still lack a comprehensive gender analysis that should inform the design of the projects.
- **Jim Tanburn: The DCED's** Green Growth Working Group is hosting a webinar on gender-responsive green growth in mid-December and the Business Environment Working Group plans to host a webinar on gender and business environment reform in late January. The DCED Annual Meeting will take place 2-5 June 2020 in Bern, Switzerland, and the thematic day will focus on evaluation, measurement and evidence.
- **Gillian Dowie: IDRC** is preparing for the second phase of its [GrOW programme](#) which will look at labour market segregation, unpaid care work, and a third, flexible, topic. IDRC is also looking at working conditions in digital enterprises in Asia, and is designing a new strategic plan with an increased emphasis on People, Profit and Planet.
- **Selina Haeny: SDC** has a focus on unpaid care work and engaging with men and boys, as well as on women's financial inclusion (particularly related to insurance) and fintech's

ability to close the financial inclusion gap. It is developing a course on gender and economics to be run for SDC staff in mid-2020 and to be offered by the Centre for Development and Cooperation - NADEL, Zurich, thereafter open to the wider donor and practitioners community.

Work item 1: WEE webinar series

The WEEWG organised its first webinar in November 2019, with Francisco Campos presenting the World Bank's [Profiting from Parity: Unlocking the Potential of Women's Businesses in Africa](#) report. A recording of the webinar is available on [YouTube](#) and Nathalie Wyser (SDC) recommended reading at least the executive summary of the report.

The next WEEWG webinar is on Men and Boys' Engagement for WEE and is scheduled for 3pm CET on 16 January 2020. It will feature Gary Barker from [PROMUNDO](#). Other webinars to take place in the first half of next year are:

WEE Transformative Approaches in Practice: ILO and GIZ will collaborate on this webinar and will aim to host it in February or March 2020. It was suggested that the webinar could draw on ILO's women's entrepreneurship graduation programme and tie in with the publication of its guide.

Canada and Sweden's Feminist International Policies: Sweden now has outcomes from the first few years of its [feminist foreign policy](#) being in place and Sida is happy to share these in a webinar. IDRC proposes to be involved from the side of Canada.

Action item: The DCED Secretariat will liaise with designated agencies to organise the webinars.

Work item 2: Gender lens investing

Amy Rice (DCED Secretariat) presented a [brief introduction to gender lens investing](#) (GLI) and the existing literature. The Group discussed how various agencies are engaged in GLI and the gender biases that are present in investment decisions (highlighted by [a study in Sweden](#)). Members of the group were most interested in which GLI approaches are most effective, and how donors can get involved; what is meant by GLI needs to be better understood.

The Group decided that it will work together to learn more about each other's views over January-March 2020 and will decide on further action in the next work plan. Some members are in the process of assessing support of the [Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa \(AFAWA\)](#) from the African Development Bank and expressed a common need to share views of their assessments (in progress) among the members. Gisela Strand (Sida) will join the task team (Canada, SDC, Sida).

Action item: All members will review the literature referenced in the WEEWG GLI Briefing Note. The Secretariat will contact the task team to organize online working sessions focused around feedback on AFAWA.

Work item 3: Unpaid care work

Amy Rice (DCED Secretariat) presented a [brief introduction to unpaid care work](#) and the existing literature. The Group discussed linking this work with that of the OECD, IFC and ILO; interest was expressed by both ILO and GIZ in business models that can make unpaid care work paid.

The Group decided it would use the allocated funding for this work item to hire a consultant to compile examples of projects or business models that have successfully addressed unpaid care work by making it paid.

Action item: Amy Rice (DCED Secretariat) will draft Terms of Reference and send to the Group for comment. All members will share suggestions of consultants to approach.

Sida: Feminist foreign policy and evaluations

Gisela Strand (Sida) highlighted a report on the outcomes of Sweden's feminist foreign policy thus far, but saved an in-depth presentation for the planned webinar. She noted that Sweden has recently become the first country to publish a [feminist trade policy](#). Gisela presented the results from [OECD'S DAC peer review](#) and how Sweden has responded to them. She also presented results from an internal review in which 20 projects were evaluated on the degree of their WEE focus. The results suggest some improvement from five years ago, but that there is still more to be done.

Keynote presentation from Business for Social Responsibility (BSR)

Kate Coles (Director of Partnership Development, BSR) introduced [BSR](#) and presented their approaches to achieving WEE. Lauren Shields (Associate Director, HERproject) introduced [HERproject](#), a BSR initiative focused on women's roles in global supply chains, and presented on the [impact](#) of its programmes. The Group discussed the differential gender impact of HERproject, practical details of HERproject programmes, and the role of regulation in achieving responsible business action.

AOB

The Group will next meet in person at the DCED Annual Meeting, 2-5 June 2020 in Bern.