



The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development

Women's Enterprise Working Group Meeting - June 20th, 2012

Participants (face to face):

Susan Joeques, DCED Secretariat
Thao Nguyen, International consultant
Joni Simpson, ILO
Virginia Rose-Losada, ILO
Nicola Ehlermann-Cache, OECD
Kris Easter, USAID
Peter Tschumi, SDC

Torbjörn Fredriksson, UNCTAD
Scarlette Fondeur-Gil, UNCTAD
Fiorina Mugione, UNCTAD
(present in the morning)
Stephanie Bonilla-Féret, UNCTAD
(replaced F. Muggione)

Participants (via phone):

Morning:

Christina Rosendahl, GIZ
Lisa Burley, IDRC
Arjan De Haan, IDRC
Lindi Hlanze, DFID

Afternoon:

David Weber (+1), CIDA
Lisa Burley, IDRC
Christina Rosendahl, GIZ
Anastasia de Santos, USAID

Introduction

This meeting of the DCED Working group on Women's Entrepreneurship Development took place on June 20th, 2012 at ILO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. The main objectives were to share recommendations from the mapping exercise made by Ms. Thao Nguyen and agree on and finalize a working plan for the working group for the coming year to be submitted to the DCED Ex CO during the Annual Meeting to be held in Berlin on July 11-12, 2012. The mapping exercise was financed by UNCTAD and Mrs Nguyen's in person participation at the working group meeting was financed by IDRC.

DCED update

During the meeting, Ms. Susan Joeques from DCED Secretariat made an update on DCED and Ex Co plans for working groups within the DCED. At the upcoming annual meeting concrete actions and budget plans for the upcoming year by all working groups will have to be presented to benefit from financial support from the DCED budget. The internal processes have been reviewed and it was recommended to the working group to prepare for a 3 year strategic planning framework (2013-2015). If a group of agencies wishes to discuss a given topic, they may also create a Community of Practice but no financial support from the DCED will be allocated.

Mapping exercise (Ms. Thao Nguyen)

Following the DCED update, Ms. Thao Nguyen presented preliminary findings from a mapping exercise on what members of the group are doing in WED and which had as main goal to identify joint knowledge gaps & make recommendations that the working group can carry forward. A major finding was that the respondents all recognized major knowledge gaps in this field that created difficulties for the design, implementation and assessment of WED interventions. Four main areas for future work were highlighted, and several recommendations made under each area of knowledge gaps:

1. Outcomes and impact indicators that will cover the full range of economic, social & psychological results of WED interventions
 - a) Study reviewing existing relevant universal indicators and identify/adapt them for measuring WED interventions
 - b) Adding a WED-specific indicator to the core indicators in DCED Standard
 - c) Practical guideline for project monitoring of WED initiatives based on DCED Standard
 - d) Pilot study applying the DCED Standard to WED initiatives
 - e) Online collection of key resources, updateable by members
 - f) Proposal for DCED to encourage sex-disaggregated data collection.
2. Strategies or methodologies that enable women entrepreneurs to transition their businesses from informal to formal economy
 - a) Diagnostic tool to explore motivation & barriers
 - b) Study of initiatives that use new approaches to facilitate formalization
3. Evidence for (or against) the hypothesis that supporting women-led business leads to better firm performance & a more widespread distribution of benefits.
 - a) Review and comparison of the impact of gender-blind PSD on firm performance and distribution of benefits
4. How to effectively support women's entrepreneurship development (through policies involving more the stakeholders, use of ICTs as a leverage & more studies on barriers faced by micro-entrepreneurs to be able to help them better).

Discussion about recommendations

Ms. Nguyen was thanked and congratulated by all participants for her work and for the recommendations put forward in terms of common knowledge gaps and knowledge products to possibly be undertaken by the group. No major issue or question was raised on the presentation and Ms. Nguyen highlighted how the findings were drawn from a sample of 50 projects indicative of work supporting women entrepreneurship by 12 agencies that participated in the survey.

In terms of taking the recommendations forward, several members raised that the issue of formality and informality was complex out of the scope of this working group and should therefore be left out at this stage. Suggestions were made to work with what already exists such as enhancing the DCED Standard to better respond to the needs and objectives of WED (and gender mainstreamed PSD) projects and propose a pilot. Also, collaborating more closely with other DCED groups in order to learn from each other's experience and help them better apply gender mainstreaming was suggested.

Members agreed that recommendations on further working on indicators & monitoring were more important at this stage and would thus lead the work for the next year. However, it was mentioned that the other recommendations and areas highlighted by Ms. Nguyen would be kept for future reference and possible future work.

Discussion about work plan (afternoon)

Mr. Peter Tschumi from SDC and Ms. Joeques from the DCED secretariat stated that collecting sex disaggregated data was still a challenge to users of the DCED Standard.

Nevertheless, the WG should work with the DCED results measurement framework as it now stands, liaising with the results measurement working group. Ms. Joni Simpson from ILO and Mr. Torbjörn Fredriksson from UNCTAD underlined that in some projects sex disaggregated data don't however tell the whole picture. Several members agreed that a WED-specific indicator at the household level, could be beneficial. Ms. Lisa Burley from IDRC, Mr. David Weber from CIDA, and Ms. Anastasia de Santos from USAID suggested to have a look at EDGE (UN Women) and WEE knowledge gateway for statistics and indicators. Ms. Nicola Ehlermann-Cache from OECD an agency that is not project driven but a receiver of this type of information that then works at the policy level, asked the WG to consider how the data could be useful to them when showing results to governments. Mr de Haan, IDRC, urged the group to develop knowledge on how WED donors engage with policy makers as a route to scaling up their interventions.

Several members agreed that there was a need to show "good practice" cases of application of the DCED Standard that agencies already have finding projects where it's been tried, whether it worked or not, and seeing how it was implemented. Then, specific projects could be selected and improved results measurement systems trialed a pilot. Ms. Christina Rosendahl from GIZ suggested to develop "good practice" impact chains (including indicators at different levels) for WED projects, both for "women only" as well as for "mainstreaming" projects, based on existing projects. Such impact chains could serve as a monitoring guideline for similar projects.

Budget

Participants in the room and on the phone were asked about their organizations' availability/willingness to provide complementary or additional funds to those the new action plan would be able to mobilize from the DCED at the Annual Meeting. SDC as well as CIDA volunteered to check internally. IDRC stated they would wait and see how things developed as well as needs.

Action Plan : brainstorming of ideas

Participants were invited to put forward ideas for joint work for the coming year. Below, a snapshot is presented of the ideas put forward by participants. Some were put forward as points for future reference, things members should always have in mind (such as the heterogeneity of women and of enterprises) or suggestions for collaboration or linking. The ideas for action that came out of the exercise were synthesized and presented in an actual work-plan that was drafted and shared via email with all members.

A. List of ideas for joint action proposed:

1. Desk Review of the DCED Standard from a gender perspective
 - a. Recommendations
 - b. Indicators
 - c. Process
 - d. Pilot

2. Focus on Results chains in the DCED Standard
 - a. Learning from projects experience in drafting and developing results chains
 - b. Developing gender sensitive results chains that could serve as reference points for future projects
 3. Qualitative studies on household level
 - a. Cases of specific indicators on household level & WED.
 - b. New ILO project in East Africa where new household indicators could be piloted (violence, domestic tasks time, decision making, etc.).
 4. Policy Brief
 - a. Work on two types of policy brief in WED. One targeted at government & other stakeholders and a second targeted to Donors
- B. List of suggestions for linking up/sharing:
1. EDGE – UN Women & WEE knowledge Gateway
 - a. Link indicators
 - b. Statistics
 2. USAID Women’s leadership in SMEs
 - a. Knowledge platform
 3. Link: IDRC – DFID
 - a. WEE Policy – Research

Updates

At the end of the day, participants updated the working group on their organizations and ongoing/upcoming projects¹.

- SDC spoke of Making Markets Work for the Poor and their efforts to better promote gender equality within this important area of work for SDC. A concept note and online discussion were carried out on this issue. More information can be found on www.sdc-employment-income.ch
- GIZ spoke of its efforts to ensure that all projects in their appraisals carry out gender analysis. They are planning to conduct a day-long training on women’s economic empowerment this fall, and might extend this to a 3 day-training later on.
- CIDA spoke of their report on Women’s Economic Empowerment currently in translation
- USAID spoke of the recently launched gender policy to reduce gender based violence, and increase capability of girls and women in decision making. They also spoke of their Women Leadership in SMEs series of seminars that just started.
- UNCTAD spoke of their Women and Innovation publication, their Entrepreneurship Policy Framework in also final draft and their growing bi-annual prize to women entrepreneurs within their Empretec programme. On the ICTs front, they highlighted their intentions with support from SIDA and in collaboration with ILO to integrate ICTs in the ILO WED assessment framework and their work on the development of gender indicators in ITCs.
- OECD spoke of its Women’s Business Forum and their efforts to adapt the ILO WED framework to shed a more positive light on the situation of women-led businesses in the MENA region.
- ILO updated on its now 15 country WED assessments as well as its 10 year anniversary of having a specific programme on Women’s Entrepreneurship Development.

¹ Individual powerpoint presentations were sent around by SDC, DCED and ILO at the time of the meeting.

- IDRC said it was now programming the next 3 years but it was still at the conceptual stage. The starting point is that not all growth is good for gender equality, i.e. countries with the fastest growth are usually the slowest in closing the gender gap. IDRC said programs would start in Latin America and selected African countries.

Other

Torbjörn Fredriksson from UNCTAD volunteered to report back during the DCED Annual Meeting in Berlin on the WED working group's progress and workplan.