



**Women's Economic Empowerment Working Group (WEE WG)**

Minutes of Teleconference, 28 September 2016

31<sup>st</sup> October 2016

Participants

- Stefanie Springorum (GIZ), Chair
- Leena Akatama (Finnish MoFA)
- Louise Anten (NL MoFA)
- Helen Bradbury (ALCP Georgia, for part of the time)
- François-Philippe Dube, Alexandra Lamont, Zahir Meghji (Global Affairs Canada)
- Chantal Felder (SDC)
- Gisela Strand (Sida, for part of the time)
- Yasuyo Okumoto (JICA)
- Jim Tanburn, Melina Heinrich-Fernandes, Nicholas Wilson (DCED Secretariat)

1: Review of new draft paper on "How to operationalise gender and WEE in M4P"

Helen Bradbury, Team Leader of ALCP Georgia, introduced a paper summarising her experience in promoting the right ethos, systems, and tools for operationalising gender and WEE in a programme that aims to make Markets Work for the Poor (M4P). The paper fills a gap in the existing literature, as it emphasises the importance of management in integrating gender and WEE across all aspects of a programme. The objective of the paper is to share transferrable lessons with interested donors and programmes.

The working group welcomed this initiative and valued the rich insights into the complex day-to-day management implications of pursuing gender equality in M4P. As such, the group agreed in principle to publish the paper as a DCED product. The following revisions were suggested before publication:

- Add an Executive Summary (or draft a separate policy brief if deemed more appropriate)
- Make the paper more reader-friendly, for example by highlighting text, including text boxes and/or graphics
- Shorten the introduction, and if possible, other parts of the paper to make it more accessible to busy readers
- Make it clearer who the intended audiences are, and sharpen the language and focus on that basis
- Elaborate specific areas of interest, including:
  - The cost and human resource implications of integrating gender and WEE into M4P. It would be useful to highlight that the only tangible 'extra' cost was the initial training of the programme manager and staff; otherwise gender issues are mainstreamed and integrated into the regular activities of the team.
  - What are the implications for recruitment? Is it important to have a gender-balance among team members?

**Action points: The Secretariat will liaise directly with Helen Bradbury on incorporating the Working Group's suggestions. An amended document will then be circulated to members.**

## 2. Work item on “Linking to proven WEE guidance”

The objective of this work item is to identify and structure proven, practical advice on gender and WEE in line with the implementation guidelines for the DCED Standard, to facilitate adoption of good practice in integrating gender and WEE across the project cycle. A consultant will be commissioned by GIZ to implement this work, on behalf of the Working Group.

Working Group members did not suggest any additional names for the list of shortlisted consultants, who will now be invited to submit short technical and financial proposals. The Terms of Reference as shared before the call remain unchanged.

The task team for reviewing the contractors’ submissions will consist of Stefanie Springorum and Chantal Felder, and the DCED Secretariat.

### **Action points:**

- **Members can still suggest any additional consultants until Friday, 30 September.**
- **An invitation for proposals will be sent to shortlisted consultants by 5 October.**
- **The winning bid will be selected between 25 and 27 October.**
- **To inform the work of the consultant, WEE WG members will share practical and proven guidance documents on WEE and gender issues used by their PSD programmes by the end of October at the latest.**

## 3. Member Updates

Alexandra Lamont summarised Global Affairs Canada’s recent work. The Canadian government is currently undertaking an international assistance review. Initial consultations have now been completed. The outcomes of this review are not fully crystallised yet, however WEE will be central to Global Affairs Canada’s future policy direction.

Louise Anten highlighted that the Netherlands MoFA is currently engaged in a learning process with a number of value chain initiatives (e.g. IDH, UTZ and Solidaridad), with a particular focus on how to address gender equality issues. The agency is also currently working with the Global Banking Alliance for Women, as well as the Business for Social Responsibility initiative, which aims to integrate gender codes into corporation’s internal procedures.

Gisela Strand informed that Sida is currently building up its competence on Women’s Economic Empowerment, which is part of Sida’s Gender Action plan for 2016-2018 with training sessions on WEE in conflict/post-conflict, Gender Equality/WEE linkages to Environment and Climate Change and M4P. Several value chain initiatives and decent employment work programmes have been presented to the Quality Assurance Committees at Sida where there are still scope for improvement of WEE. Sida’s efforts to increase the percentage of the total aid volume going to gender equality as a principal objective (main objective) have resulted in an increasing demand for gender equality/WEE expertise at operational level during 2016.

Chantal Felder noted that SDC currently has several projects on vocational training and skills development in the Balkans, which include strong gender aspects. SDC is also supporting a [UN Conference: Economic Empowerment of Women](#) in October, with several representatives from UN agencies and the World Bank.

Leena Akatama highlighted that PSD continues to be an important topic for Finland, and gender mainstreaming is important within that. The agency has recently produced a number of gender

analyses on its existing projects. One of the current focus areas is how to help employment programmes for migrants and refugees in North Africa, Afghanistan and Jordan adopt more gender-sensitive approaches.

Yasuyo Okumoto informed the group that the Japanese government will organise a meeting in Tokyo in December, entitled the “World Assembly for Women”. There will be five sessions on WEE at this event.

Stefanie Springorum explained that GIZ’s gender focal points from its various sections recently gathered to evaluate and discuss its current gender strategies and goals. A roadmap for 2017 will be identified by the end of the year. GIZ also holds an annual gender competition, where teams at headquarters and in the field can submit innovative approaches and tools for promoting gender equality. 87 submissions were received and will be published in a new publication (to be shared with the Minutes). At the agency’s recent PSD symposium there were two gender sessions: one that focussed on gender diversity management and one on WEE and decent work (with a focus on the textile industry). Recent publications on gender and WEE include:

- [BMZ Gender Strategy](#)
- [BMZ Gender Action Plan 2016-2020](#)
- [GIZ Guidelines on designing a gender-sensitive results-based monitoring \(RBM\) system](#)

GIZ has also completed a report on women and financial development in insurance. This has not yet been published, but will be shared by Stefanie with the group once available.

#### 4. Suggestions for future work items

No suggestions for other work items were made. Participants agreed to share any ideas by email as and when they arise. It was noted that the final report of the UN Secretary-General’s [High-Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment](#) could potentially inform future work items of the group.

#### Next meeting

Participants agreed to arrange another teleconference in the first quarter of 2017. This would coincide with the availability of the first draft of the work item on 'Linking to proven WEE guidance'.