

Women's Economic Empowerment Working Group (WEEWG)

Minutes of Meeting, 13 June 2017

5th July 2017

Participants

- Sebastian Gilcher (GIZ), Chair
- Louise Anten (Netherlands MOFA)
- Marc Blanchette (Global Affairs Canada)
- Gisela Strand (SIDA)
- Lisanne van Beek (Netherlands Enterprise Agency)
- Nathalie Wyser (SDC)
- Chantal Felder (SDC)
- Francisco Campos (World Bank Group)
- Cristina Scarpocchi (FAO)
- Nicholas Wilson (DCED)
- Gabrielle Ott (UNIDO)
- Nozomi Ide (FAO)
- Sonia Jordan (Adam Smith International, via Skype)
- BEWG participants for joint session ([see minutes when uploaded](#))

Brief updates of member agencies' past and upcoming activities.

Members of the WEEWG present at the meeting provided updates about their agencies' past and upcoming activities, including new report, political measures and news about the implementation of WEE projects.

A discussion on common WEE definition

Gisela Strand (SIDA) led a discussion on a common WEE definition for the group (see Attachment 2). After presenting definitions of different organisations, the group discussed two questions: (1) How and when is the WEE definition important to your work and (2) To what extent do you work on transformative change in your interventions. It became obvious that the discussion is an exercise that goes beyond the mere agreement on wording, but is actually about a common understanding of the theory of change of WEE. The common consensus was that measures for WEE must go beyond economic determinants of access and agency and include other social/soft factors. The Group discussed the importance of a number of these factors, such as family planning, health and sexual harassment. It was outlined, that there is a need for more projects to adapt a broader focus of WEE and that the experience of successful programs must be systematically analysed and the lessons-learned shared more widely. A market system analysis must include these broader gender issues as

well. This also implies a greater coordination between different thematic projects in a country or region and that project managers need to be further trained in gender-related issues.

Agreement/Action: *It was agreed that further discussion, potentially with external inputs, will need to follow (e.g. at the planned WEE conference, see Work Item 2).*

Presentation of the Gender Innovation Lab

Francisco Campos (World Bank Group) gave a presentation on the Gender Innovation Lab, with a focus on Africa, of the Enterprise Development and Gender Unit of the World Bank Group. After providing a general overview of the lab, he discussed three global gender issues in more detailed: (1) occupational choice segregation; (2) skills and (3) (more than) microfinance. He concluded that gender gaps in business performance are still very high in Africa and that innovative solutions are necessary to address these constraints. The Gender Innovation Lab provides useful information and knowledge about these gaps, so that they can be successfully addressed. Further information can be seen in Attachment 3.

Presentation and Discussion of the Synthesis Report “Proven Guidance on delivering and measuring Women’s Economic Empowerment using the DCED Standard”

Sonia Jordan (Adam Smith International) presented the consultative process and main findings of the synthesis report (see Attachment 4). The Group greatly appreciated the presentation and the clarification that were provided by Sonia Jordan. Even though, the report is greatly appreciated and seen as useful for practitioners in particular, the Group discussed the usability and accessibility of the papers for donors. Furthermore, it was identified that social aspects, as were discussed in the morning session, are not included in the report.

Agreement/ Action: *In order for donors to make greater use of the Synthesis Report it was decided that a donor-specific summary will be developed (see new Work Item 5 on page 4).*

Joint Meeting Business Environment Reform and Women’s Economic Empowerment

In a joint meeting with the Business Environment Reform Working Group (BEWG), updates and presentations of final report on Gender and Financial Inclusion and Informality were given by Catherine Miles, the consultant who was contracted to draft the report for this work item. She highlighted that gender-sensitive BER donor interventions require addressing not only financial usage barriers. She also gave a brief overview of the intervention examples. The BEWG is not anticipated that any specific further work on BER and gender will be undertaken in the future and the lead for these issues lies within the WEEWG. For further information, see [minutes](#) from BEWG when uploaded 5.

Discussion on Progress Report and Work Plan

After a brief outline of the progress report by Sebastian Gilcher, the group discussed the Work Plan 2017-2018 (see [DCED webpage](#)).

Item 1: Scoping Study on Women Economic Empowerment in Migration Contexts

The Scoping Study (title tbd) will identify and outline current programs in the field of WEE in the refugee and migration context. Additionally, it will identify gaps and make recommendations for potential future private sector development initiatives in the field of gender in the migration context.

A consultancy will be contracted to conduct desk-research of literature and review and interview with programs. Different contexts (e.g. returnee programs, refugee camps etc.) and instruments (e.g. cash-for-work, start-up promotion etc.) will be analysed.

The cost for the report was requested from the Trust Fund, and has been approved by the ExCo. The task team for this work item includes: Sebastian Gilcher, BMZ/GIZ; Gisela Strand (SIDA) and Mark Blanchette (Global Affairs Canada, tbc)

***Agreement/ Action:** Sebastian Gilcher will take the lead and share the first draft of the Terms of Reference with the other members of the task team, before it will be distributed and discussed with the rest of the WEEWG.*

Item 2: Women Economic Empowerment Practitioners' workshop

The aim of the workshop is to share tools and lessons-learned and initiate exchange, as well as to position the DCED and the Working Group in the field. In order to engage a wider audience, the workshop would be ideally placed back-to-back with another (DCED or WEE) event. During the workshop, innovative approaches to WEE in different sectors (e.g. transport, agriculture etc.), and issues such as unpaid care work and gender budgeting, can also be looked at.

The cost will depend on the venue and the number of speakers needed and is anticipated from BMZ/GIZ. The work item has been approved by the ExCo. The task team for this work item includes: Sebastian Gilcher, (BMZ/GIZ); Arjan De Haan, IDRC (tbc), Gisela Strand (SIDA), Lianne van Beek (Netherlands Enterprise Agency)

***Agreement/ Action:** The task team will look and ask for potential events, where the workshop could be held back-to-back. It is suggested that a list of all WEE-related events is developed and shared with the group.*

Item 3: WEE and Social Entrepreneurship – making the business case

A stock take of experiences from the Members of the WEEWG so far of promoting WEE within social enterprises will analyse good practices, list gaps or need for assistance to increase the outreach and to deduct recommendations for social enterprises and for organisations supporting them.

The task team for this work item includes: Nathalie Wyser (SDC); Sebastian Gilcher, BMZ/GIZ.

Agreement/ Action: *As no funding has been dedicated for the work item, the task team will undertake an internal stock take. The internal document will help the group decide to analyse the work item further in the next year.*

Item 4: WEE and Private Sector Engagement: How to support women's economic empowerment through engaging with the private sector.

The final report of the UNSG's High-level Panel on WEE stresses that WEE must be done in ways that leave nobody behind, particularly the most marginalized women at the bottom of the pyramid. Building on the report, an internal assessment of the working group members will analyse the following questions: What are the challenges? What are best practices? Can we develop strategies and suggestions for concrete actions? The WEEWG seeks close collaboration with the newly established DCED Working Group on Private Sector Engagement.

The task team for this work item includes: Nathalie Wyser (SDC); Louise Anten (Netherlands MOFA)

Agreement/ Action: *As no funding has been dedicated for the work item, the task team will undertake an internal stock take. The internal document will help the group decide to analyse the work item further in the next year.*

Item 5 (NEW): Snapshot for Policy Makers of the Synthesis Report "Proven Guidance on delivering and measuring Women Economic Empowerment using the DCED Standard"

The Synthesis Report on 'Proven Guidance on delivering and measuring Women Economic Empowerment using the DCED Standard' has been successfully completed and will be further distributed. However, the focus of the report clearly lies on practitioners who are engaged in the project implementation of WEE programs. In order for donors to make use of the report and persuade their implementing partners in adopting the guidance, a short summary snapshot for policy makers, including the main outputs, use and recommendations for policy makers and implementers will be developed. This includes a compact presentation of the main outcomes of the report.

The task team for this work item includes: Sebastian Gilcher (BMZ/GIZ), Louise Anten (Netherlands MOFA) and Gisela Strand (SIDA)

Agreement/ Action: *During the annual meeting, this new work item was included in the work plan and approved by the ExCo at the Business Day Meeting. The task team will share the Terms of Reference with the group and a consultant will be hired to develop the work item.*

Item 6: Continue to share knowledge on gender and WEE

The WEE WG will continue to exchange knowledge on the latest developments around PSD, gender and WEE. New insights and relevant publications will be shared via the DCED website and newsletters. The group will also explore sharing experiences and DCED knowledge products at external fora and platforms.

For all work items, the task teams are responsible to take the work forward. It is advised, that they will have an internal exchange soon and discuss the outcomes with the WEEWG afterwards. Furthermore, it should always be considered whether the work items can be used efficiently by member of the group and their target groups and where necessary consider to develop presentations, summaries etc.

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Next steps & Further Agreements

Sebastian Gilcher summed up the day, focussing on what the next steps for the coming year should be.

Furthermore, the following agreements were made during the annual WEEWG meeting:

- *Gabrielle Ott (UNIDO) and Cristina Scarpocchi (FAO) will be added to the mailing distribution list of the WEEWG. If other members would like to be added or be deleted from the list, they can contact Sebastian Gilcher*
 - *Sebastian Gilcher will prepare a PowerPoint Presentation of the WEEWG, including some general information about the DCED and the WEEWG, as well as short summaries of work items. This presentation shall provide an accessible reference for the members and interested parties.*
 - *The Group agreed that relevant reports, policy briefs etc. will be collected (see Attachment 5). Members that were not present at the meeting may add reports etc. to the list.*
 - *For the next virtual meeting, the secretariat will send out a doodle poll. It shall be held in early autumn.*
 - *Sebastian Gilcher seeks to share the Co-Chair function with another member to be able to discuss upcoming issues and share responsibilities. Members interesting in the Co-Chair function may contact him.*
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Attachments:

1. *Agenda of the Annual Meeting*
2. *Presentation of WEE Definitions*
3. *Presentation of Gender Innovation Lab*
4. *Presentation of Synthesis Report “Proven Guidance on delivering and measuring Women’s Economic Empowerment using the DCED Standard”*
5. *List of Reports, Studies etc. concerning WEE*