

Women's Economic Empowerment Working Group (WEE WG)
Teleconference Minutes, 13 April 2016

20 April 2016

Participants

Stefanie Springorum (GIZ), Chair	Leena Akatama (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland)
Gisela Strand (Sida)	
Wade Channell (USAID)	Chantal Felder (SDC)
Shawn Hayes, Julius Egbeyemi (Global Affairs Canada)	Jim Tanburn, Melina Heinrich-Fernandes, Nabanita Sen, Nick Wilson (DCED Secretariat)

Apologies:

Louise Anten (Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs)	Polly Le Grand (DFID)
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Report back from the DCED Seminar and informal WEE practitioner meeting in Bangkok
Jim Tanburn provided a brief summary of the DCED's Global Results Measurement Seminar in Bangkok in March 2016, which was attended by 130 participants. It included a popular session on measuring women's economic empowerment, which was chaired by Birgit Seibel of GIZ.

The occasion of the DCED Seminar was used to hold a small, informal meeting with WEE experts and practitioners – as discussed at the last WEE working group meeting in Berlin – to solicit their ideas on how to make progress in the field of gender and WEE (see separate Minutes shared with the group by email for details).

In order to find concrete entry points for action, it was argued that it would be useful to think of programmes in three segments:

1. 'Champions' of WEE, effectively pioneering efforts to integrating WEE and PSD;
2. Programmes that are interested in integrating WEE and PSD but still lack knowledge and skills to do so effectively; and
3. Programmes that are not motivated to change current practice.

It was concluded that maximum impact could be achieved by focussing on the second group of practitioners, those which are interested in working on gender issues and WEE but lack the resources to do so.

A particularly useful way forward for the Working Group could be to support the development of advice that would outline the minimum that PSD programmes can do to integrate gender and WEE issues across the project cycle, then moving over time to more in-depth engagement. The guidance could support new programmes and those engaging for the first time, while providing a 'road map'

for more advanced ones to do more. Such guidance would be based on existing experience and resources in the field, bringing them together in one place, rather than duplicating them.

The eight [implementation guidelines for the DCED Standard](#) could be used to give a framework and structure to this effort, and be (lightly) edited to give access to further information about how to comply with good practice from a gender and WEE perspective, where desired. An illustration of how this could look in practice had been shared with the Working Group ahead of the call.

Jim Tanburn noted that the DCED Secretariat would probably need expert assistance to scope out proven material for linking from the guidelines. Relevant lessons from the Working Group's earlier product on Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment would be incorporated; some had noted, however, that this document was not yet practical enough to inform their day-to-day work.

The Working Group welcomed the idea. Specific points made include:

- Segmenting the market was welcomed as a useful concept, in particular, focusing on programmes that are already in the implementation stage and feel the need to become more strategic about integrating gender and WEE considerations. As they will naturally face some financial constraints in this, the guidelines could point to some simple steps that can be taken to get closer to minimum good practice requirements (e.g. making sure that women's voices are represented in policy discussions or programme research).
- The work should focus on linking to existing useful resources; there is already a profusion of new websites and platforms on the topic, so DCED work should remain complementary to these.
- There is a need to distinguish between practical 'how-to' advice for programmes' day-to-day work (which links from the DCED Standard Implementation Guidelines could address) and issues around accountability and reporting (such as the definition of WEE indicators).

Information shared by Working Group members on projects integrating PSD and WEE

Melina Heinrich-Fernandes provided a brief summary of programme information shared by Working Group members. The origin of this initiative was the group's interest in a possible scoping exercise of PSD programmes that had been successful in integrating gender and WEE in their work. As a basis for exploring the feasibility of this, it had been agreed that members would share relevant documentation first.

Overall, submissions were received from five agencies: USAID, SDC, Netherlands MFA, GIZ and Sida. These included two synthesis documents (by USAID and GIZ) on lessons learnt from various projects in their portfolio; information about 20 individual projects; and a list of an additional 20 GIZ Business Environment Reform projects, which are currently reviewed separately by a gender consultant to the Business Environment Working Group.

Three main conclusions emerged from the information shared:

1. For many programmes, the information provided did not show whether the projects were successful in integrating gender and WEE. It could be useful however, for someone to review additional programme documentation in more detail to look for possible lessons learnt.

2. Some of the programmes named are the same as those that presented at the DCED Seminar and/or that participated in the WEE practitioner meeting in Bangkok (e.g. ALCP Georgia, M4C Bangladesh). This means that useful lessons on integrating PSD and WEE can more readily be extracted from their work.
3. Future work on this could feed directly into the identification of documents to link to, from the DCED Standard Implementation Guidelines. As such, the consultant could be asked to review lessons emerging from the programmes suggested by the Working Group members.

Feedback by the Working Group

The group agreed that both work streams could converge in the same end product. It was also agreed that the group should hold off collecting more programme information from other agencies at this stage, but focus on launching the work first and gathering more information later if necessary, so as not to lose momentum.

Next steps agreed

GIZ is able to support the work of identifying proven approaches and methodologies. Other members expressed their willingness to provide technical inputs (DFID, SDC, USAID); Gisela Strand noted that Sida's gender help desk could also provide their expertise if required.

A formal work plan will need to be submitted to the DCED ExCo shortly, and then to the Annual Meeting for approval. The Secretariat will draft a work plan as well as draft Terms of Reference for the assignment for possible comment by the WEE group by 22 April 2016. Any comments will be provided by members by 29 April 2016.

Next meeting

Most members will not be able to join the DCED Annual Meeting in person, hence the Working Group agreed to be flexible about the date of their next exchange – depending on the need to liaise on the next steps. For example, a teleconference could be arranged if further consultation on the work plan is required before the Annual Meeting.