



# Gender Mainstreaming and Economic Empowerment of Women

## Practical experience of private sector promotion

### Gender parity as a growth driver

According to a study by McKinsey, narrowing the global gender gap regarding employment could double the contribution of women to global GDP growth over the next ten years. By 2025 a total of USD 28 trillion could be generated, marking a 26 per cent increase in annual GDP (gross domestic product) if the gender gap in the economy were completely closed. This shows how the economic potential offered by women can drive economic growth if harnessed. But although there is broad consensus within the scientific and research community as well as the international donor community and economic fora that gender is smart economics, actual progress remains modest on a global scale. By 2014, the gender gap in terms of economic participation and opportunity had been closed only by 60 per cent.

The majority of economies have at least one gender-based legal restriction, which does not exist for men, and, which hampers women in the exercise of their profession or in managing their own business.

Although women represent half the world's working age population, only 64 per cent are part of the labour market, and together they generate just 37 per cent of GDP.

### Gender equality in German Development Cooperation

The German Government attaches particular importance to women's participation in economic life. The Leaders' Declaration of the G7 summit in Schloss Elmau states, 'Women's economic participation reduces poverty and inequality, promotes growth and benefits all'.

Thus, German Development Cooperation is firmly committed to the Women's Empowerment Principles of the UN Global Compact and UN Women, the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Decent Work Agenda and the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. All in all, German Development Cooperation sees gender equality as a way to achieve the human-rights-based, socially equitable, sustainable development of democratic societies.



L: Woman in construction sector  
R: Woman at a conference



L: Women in technical professions  
R: Business Woman

## Private sector development and gender equality

German Development Cooperation has promoted gender equality for more than 20 years. Gender-related and gender-specific approaches and instruments have evolved and been adapted over the years at all intervention-levels<sup>1</sup>.

Private Sector Development Programmes include gender mainstreaming and women economic empowerment. Gender mainstreaming means that the gender perspective is systematically taken into account in the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of the programmes. By creating awareness at all levels of society, the empowerment approach aims to strengthen women's rights and to expand their scope for action (individually and jointly). Economic empowerment supports women's equal participation in economic life and the labour force. Having access and control over the necessary means to ensure a long-term sustainable livelihood is at the heart of the approach.

### Gender Equality Strategy of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

The gender equality strategy of the BMZ provides for a three-pronged approach:

- (i) Gender mainstreaming ensures that the gender perspective is taken into account at every stage of development cooperation,
- (ii) Empowerment provides for specific measures to eliminate gender-based discrimination and strengthen women's rights, and
- (iii) Policy dialogue embraces the systematic anchoring of women's rights and gender equality in high-level bilateral and multilateral development policy dialogues, in sector policy dialogues and in policy advice.

Source: German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Cross-sectoral strategy, Strategy Paper 2/2014, p. 3



L: Woman using mechanical tools for production  
R: Teacher



L: *Woman in a cinema*  
R: *Women in metal works*

## Project examples for women's economic empowerment

### Example 1: Changing gender roles in working life

One of the greatest challenges to closing the gender gap is the need to change gender roles within society and to change gender stereotypes.<sup>2</sup>

The Film and media campaign 'ANA HUNNA' (<http://ana-hunna.org>) is an excellent example of how awareness can be changed in a difficult societal and political context. Within the scope of the regional programme 'Economic Integration of Women in the MENA (North Africa and the Middle East) Region' a film and media campaign was conducted over a period of about four years in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. During the campaign, eight new short films were produced on the subject of women and work. Flanked by a broad media campaign, the films have now been screened at more than 330 regional, national and even international events, where they have been seen by more than 7,000 visitors. The intensive media work also helped generate greater acceptance and recognition for working women in these societies. Currently, the experience gained is being incorporated in a manual that demonstrates politicians, intermediary institutions and NGOs how to use the short films to help change awareness and change gender stereotypes. Teaching materials for showing the films at vocational schools and universities are developed. A major success factor of the campaign was its integration into a diverse network of partners, across a full spectrum from civil society bodies to state partners in the fields of media, gender, education and business. Partner representatives were thus sensitised to the gender issue through the campaign, and can act as multipliers in the long term.

### Example 2: Gender mainstreaming through policy advisory services

Policy advisory services can generate significant leverage to further gender equality. In the Philippines, the Department of Trade and Industry requested support to make its national Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise Development Plan for 2011–2016 gender responsive. The starting point was an analysis of the role and status of men and women in small, medium and micro businesses.

The short-term advisory services built upon this analysis and were incorporated directly into the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise Development Plan for 2011–2016, the Philippine Development Plan 2011–2016 and into the Women's Economic Empowerment and Gender Equality Plan<sup>3</sup> of the Philippine Commission on Women. For the first time ever, gender mainstreaming is now an integral part of the promotion of micro, small and medium enterprises in the Philippines. The concrete implementation can be seen, for instance, in the provision and use of a gender budget for relevant measures: The staff of regional and local authorities promoting local economic development have been trained in the gender-sensitive analysis of value chains and services such as training, coaching and financial support are planned and offered in a gender-sensitive manner through the ministry and its subordinate agencies. The advisory services influencing the sector framework conditions led to institutional changes followed as well as concrete services for women.





L: Women in textile industry  
R: Women using ICT

### Example 3: Labour and social standards in the textile and apparel industry

Bangladesh is the world's second largest exporter of clothing. The 5,500 or so registered textile factories employ a total of over four million people. About 80 per cent of the workforce is female, most of them uneducated, poor women. This is one of the few opportunities open to them to work in the formal sector. In spite of the economic success of the textile industry, there has been little improvement in the working and living conditions of the workers. In response to pressure exerted by international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), international purchasers are increasingly insisting on compliance with labour and social standards and environmental regulations. This is thus becoming a factor in competitiveness.

After several devastating fires and the collapse of the Rana Plaza in 2013 which cost many lives and left even more injured, the scope of the project "Promotion of Social and Environmental Standards in Industry" was expanded to also embrace measures promoting the professional rehabilitation and reintegration into the workplace of people with disabilities. The project is currently working with the ILO to support the Ministry of Labour and Employment in developing a professional inspection system. Advisory systems are being established within the trade associations of knitwear and apparel manufacturers to help companies comply with environmental and social standards. Factories are advised on how they can comply with legal provisions and voluntary

international social standards. The initial results are that, within the scope of social compliance audits, more than 500 factories have been certified as complying with national and international labour and social standards, while another 250 companies are well on the way to achieving compliance. The trade associations have trained more than 1,700 factory officers, including 400 women, to ensure compliance with safety and labour standards in their factories.

The project also supports NGOs campaigning for workers' rights, in particular female workers' rights. The NGOs have set up women's cafes, where female workers can meet and find out more about their rights and obligations. In the protected environment offered by these cafes they can discuss gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace. If necessary, they can obtain legal advice and family counselling. With the NGOs (i) more than 200,000 textile workers, roughly 85 per cent of them women, have been informed about labour law and occupational health and safety; (ii) 20,000 peer experts and group leaders have received further instruction on labour law and occupational health and safety, and (iii) 7,600 labour conflicts have been resolved.

- 1 See recent collection of tools in: Promoting equal participation in sustainable economic development – Toolbox, GIZ (2015)
- 2 The Power of Parity: How advancing women's equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth. Executive Summary, McKinsey Global Institute: Sept. 2015, p. 6
- 3 Women's Economic Empowerment and Gender Equality Plan. Philippine Commission on Women, Manila, 2013 <http://pcw.gov.ph/>

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