

# BUILDING GENDER-RESPONSIVE PROCUREMENT: LESSONS FROM RESEARCH AND PRACTICE





GUIDANCE NOTE  
BUILDING GENDER-  
RESPONSIVE PROCUREMENT:  
LESSONS FROM RESEARCH  
AND PRACTICE



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Appendix 1.</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Overview of the 11 research documents studied in this report</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>2. FINDINGS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Appendix 2.</b>	
<b>Institutions</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Definition of GRP in UN Women’s 11 research documents</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Appendix 3.</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Main objective of the CO’s programming on GRP in the country (implicit or explicit in the 11 studies)</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Capacity</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Appendix 4.</b>	
<b>3. OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>CO’s theory of change on how UN Women’s programming on GRP would broadly work (implicit or explicit in the 11 studies)</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>4. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROCUREMENT</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Appendix 5.</b>	
<b>Public procurement</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Ways proposed by CO’s to start implementing GRP programming in their country, start-up strategies and partners for collaborations (implicit or explicit in the 11 studies)</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Private procurement</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Appendix 6.</b>	
<b>5. RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Lead question investigated in UN Women’s 11 research documents</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Institutions</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Appendix 7. Programming areas and entry points for intervention identified in the 11 documents</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Appendix 8.</b>	
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Topics the CO’s asked their 11 research documents to examine (terms of reference, study objectives or research questions, as mentioned by the study authors)</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Capacity</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>Appendix 9.</b>	
<b>6. CONCLUSION</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>Specific information the CO’s requested from the 11 studies in order to inform and implement their GRP programming</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>24</b>		

# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AGPO	Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (Kenya)
BB BEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (South Africa)
CO	country office
GRP	gender-responsive procurement
ICT	information and communication technology
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information Systems
SMEs	small- and medium-sized enterprises
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
UNGM	United Nations Global Marketplace
WEE	women's economic empowerment
WEPs	Women's Empowerment Principles
WOB	women-owned business

# 1. INTRODUCTION

As part of its Flagship Programme Initiative called ‘Stimulating equal opportunities for women entrepreneurs’, UN Women works with governments, the private sector, civil society and women entrepreneurs in alignment with target 8.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): “Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services”.

Gender-responsive procurement (GRP)—the sustainable selection of services, goods or civil works that takes into account the impact on gender equality and women’s empowerment—is a key pillar of UN Women’s strategy. Its Corporate Guide to Gender-Responsive Procurement<sup>1</sup> details the business case for sourcing from women-owned businesses (WOBs), the challenge and barriers preventing WOBs from accessing and fully participating in global and local value chains, and comprehensive ‘how-tos’ that buyers can implement to increase sourcing for WOBs. More recently, UN Women developed a paper with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to explore the decent work and employment dimensions of GRP<sup>2</sup>.

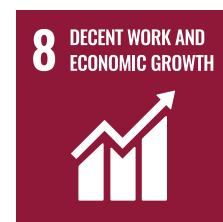
UN Women’s work in about 40 countries draws on GRP strategies and knowledge. The present report synthesizes its relevant research in Brazil, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Senegal and South Africa in order to develop recommendations for programming and policy development that can have a transformative impact on the material realities of women entrepreneurs, business owners and workers. The intended audience is development actors, including government, civil society, UN and the private sector, who are planning or implementing such GRP policies and programmes. The aim is that this knowledge will foster learning that enables GRP advocates to scale up their programmes based on evidence and practical experience.

## Overview

Overall, the studies show that GRP, or even simply women’s participation in procurement by large public and private entities, remains extremely limited in the seven countries examined. The studies from Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and South Africa explore how information, dialogue and advocacy help public procuring entities make their formal frameworks and practices of procurement gender-responsive<sup>3</sup>.

The study from Brazil has a private-sector focus, exploring how internal practices to apply the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs)<sup>4</sup> and good practices in the fields of supplier diversity and sustainable procurement can result in the participation of more WOBs in companies’ supply chains.

The two studies from Pakistan focus on procurement by the Government and multinational companies and a supply-side mapping of women’s businesses.



<sup>1</sup> UN Women 2017a.

<sup>2</sup> UN Women and ILO 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix 4 presents each country office’s theory of change on how UN Women’s programming on GRP would broadly work.

<sup>4</sup> The WEPs “are a set of Principles offering guidance to business on how to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community. Established by the UN Global Compact and UN Women, the WEPs are informed by international labour and human rights standards and grounded in the recognition that businesses have a stake in, and a responsibility for, gender equality and women’s empowerment” (Empower Women n.d.).



*Strategic entry points and challenges for GRP depend on four factors: legal and institutional frameworks (institutions); partnerships among different stakeholders (partnerships); data (evidence); and the capabilities of buyers and suppliers (capacity) in a country. This report is structured around those four categories.*

The UN Women studies employ diverse approaches to GRP, depending on the context.<sup>5</sup>

- Six studies—on Nigeria, Pakistan (2), Rwanda and South Africa (2)—refer primarily to gender-responsive or gender-smart procurement, using the purposely broad definitions offered by UN Women in *The Power of Procurement*<sup>6</sup> or in the United Nations Global Marketplace (UNGM).<sup>7</sup>
- Three studies that are centred on public procurement—Kenya, Senegal and South Africa—refer to affirmative procurement, or affirmative action, for women entrepreneurs and define this by referring to the applicable national laws.
- Three studies—on Brazil and South Africa (2)—refer to concepts focused on the private sector, namely the WEPs, supply chain diversity and sustainability and supplier diversity.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Appendix 2 lays out the different definitions of GRP adopted in the 11 studies.

<sup>6</sup> Chin 2017.

<sup>7</sup> For example, the UNGM definition of GRP cited in the studies is: “the sustainable selection of services, goods or works that takes into account the impact on gender equality and women’s empowerment, and actively seeks to reduce barriers to entry for women’s businesses to benefit from business opportunities”.

<sup>8</sup> For example, supplier diversity is defined as “the purchasing of services and goods from minority suppliers (Adobor and McMullen 2007), which includes women-owned business enterprises” (FGVcelog 2019b, p. 4).



In all seven countries, the programming focuses on increasing the participation of women entrepreneurs and WOBs—typically SMEs—in procurement by increasing their capacities and/or modifying policies and practices on the demand side. As mentioned earlier, UN Women and ILO (2021) have a broader definition of GRP that incorporates a lens on employment and working conditions. However, the traditional definition of GRP is at the core of most of the countries' work, and therefore the lessons will focus mainly on GRP designed with the aim of supporting women entrepreneurs and business owners.

The wide range of GRP approaches reflects complex power relationships between governments and enterprises that are not gender neutral. Focus can be on the private or public sector and on the supply (workers and entrepreneurs/business owners) or demand (buyers) side. While countries employ different strategies, all must contend with the ultimate challenge that procurement is guided and regulated by values of competition and cost savings, which can leave scant room for a gender-responsive approach that benefits those most left behind. Buyers seek to optimize price and broader considerations about public goods (e.g., human rights, decent work, environmental protection) while women's businesses struggle to compete, especially in settings with high levels of

poverty and inequality. The challenges are compounded by corruption, favouritism and partisanship.

Nevertheless, despite the challenges, countries have delivered tangible results.

In the Kenya study, 82 per cent of the businesses surveyed that have embraced the Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) initiative (as businesses owned by women, youth or persons with disabilities) report benefiting from it. Benefits range from business expansion, greater profit margins, greater stocks, increased employment and the ability to pay fees, to provide for basic needs and to purchase property.<sup>9</sup>

As this report will outline, strategic entry points and challenges for GRP depend on four factors: legal and institutional frameworks (institutions); partnerships among different stakeholders (partnerships); data (evidence); and the capabilities of buyers and suppliers (capacity) in a country. Additionally, it will identify opportunities and compare public and private procurement. Finally, recommendations are made to inform further collective action in the area of GRP.



9 Kiriti Nganga 2017, pp. 10–11.

## 2. FINDINGS



### Institutions

Procurement systems reflect the values of the buyers, and these can be reproduced through their actions. Women’s negative experiences with procurement processes can be due to lack of gender responsiveness and/or deficiencies in the procurement process and system. Dominant sexist norms and behaviours limit and constrain many women’s autonomy when setting up and running a business.

“[E]ntrenched traditional and patriarchal perceptions restrict women’s mobility, limit social networks, discriminate based on gender or marital status, impose restrictions based on reproductive and domestic responsibilities and hamper decision-making powers and time availability, hence strictly limiting their economic activity and growth of businesses. These factors force WOBs to operate in the informal, lower value-added service sectors and home-based enterprises producing specifically for intermediaries. The situation results in limiting WOBs’ access to financial literacy, business skills and business acumen crucial for sustainable growth and many women fail to increase the scale of their enterprises enough to trigger significant economic renewal”.<sup>10</sup>

The formal framework in a country matters for gender-responsive procurement (GRP), from laws and regulations to policies, even though it is not enough by itself to ensure that procuring entities will successfully apply GRP. Legal and policy frameworks pose obstacles to GRP when they ignore gender and/or lack precision, enforcement, comprehensiveness or consistency (e.g., failing to meaningfully define WOBs or to set formal

obligations, targets and sanctions regarding GRP) or leave agencies or departments with discretionary power to shape their procurement. In addition, among SMEs that are buyers, a number lack a formal procurement policy altogether, let alone a gender-responsive one, even when they have a stated goal to practise GRP.

In the public sector, a set of laws, regulations, amendments, legal notices and processes make up the formal legal and institutional framework of procurement, whether it is gender-neutral (Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda) or includes provisions for GRP (Kenya, Senegal, South Africa). There can be relevant elements at multiple national or subnational levels simultaneously—for example, at federal, provincial and municipal levels.

Other kinds of policies can advance GRP. For example, provisions in favour of SMEs in procurement are helpful, particularly in contexts where SMEs are typically owned or dominated by women. WOBs can also take advantage of policies outside the realm of procurement, such as credit support measures for SMEs. Preferential procurement in support of disadvantaged groups can enable GRP if it includes women in the groups concerned.

In the private sector, the set of relevant formal policies, mandates and strategies adopted by individual companies for GRP typically include: policies and processes on procurement, sourcing and structured and competitive bidding; programmes for sustainability or supplier diversity; any policies, mandates or strategies for GRP developed at a high level; and any initiatives for buying from or supporting women-owned suppliers or for GRP, be it as part of corporate social responsibility (Brazil, Pakistan) or as a result of public laws for affirmative procurement (South Africa). Beyond individual company policies, there can also be volunteer industry codes on affirmative procurement. Moreover, in South Africa, several sectors have adopted Codes of Good Practice or Charters to apply the publicly mandated Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BB BEE)<sup>11</sup>.

10 UNW Pakistan n.d.-a, p. 13.

11 These codes set goals and targets for procurement from Black South Africans and lay out the associated ratings for BB BEE scoring. Once the codes are set, they are binding on companies in that sector. The sectoral codes include Black WOBs as a stand-alone category of supplier and set targets for preferential procurement from them. The sectors that have adopted such codes since 2009 are: agriculture; finance; forestry; construction; ICT; marketing, advertising and communications; mining; property; transport; and tourism (UNW SAMCO 2019, p. 41).



## Partnerships

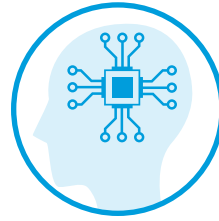
GRP programming rests on close collaborations with many diverse stakeholders. The studies took four major approaches to partnership.<sup>12</sup>

First, all of the studies recommend close collaboration with women entrepreneurs and WOBs, sometimes focusing on WOBs with the greatest likelihood of success in procurement<sup>13</sup>, sometimes including more disadvantaged WOBs. The major aim is to support and empower them to seize opportunities in GRP and consult with them to facilitate dialogue with public, private and non-profit actors to improve women's position in procurement.

Second, findings from country offices (COs) working with the public sector (Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa) propose close collaborations with public officials, civil servants and political party leaders to push for improvements in the formal framework and in the practices and capacities of public procurement so that WOBs benefit as both direct and subcontracted suppliers.

Third, lessons from the private sector (Brazil, Pakistan, South Africa) show a need for close collaboration with large private companies to encourage them to adopt and implement policies to increase inclusion of WOBs in their supply chains.

Fourth, studies for both the public and private sector (Pakistan, Rwanda, Senegal) propose close collaborations with other relevant stakeholders such as various professional associations (chambers of commerce, business associations, trade or industry associations), women's associations, the main private and non-profit institutions promoting women's entrepreneurship, actors promoting gender equality and development actors.



## Evidence

COs conducted or commissioned research to build evidence to support GRP. The studies employed quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods

to tackle contexts with scarce data on procurement, business and gender together<sup>14</sup>.

The studies cover five major angles: the mapping of women's businesses in a particular market; the current state of participation of women's businesses in procurement; the supply-side barriers women entrepreneurs face; the demand-side frameworks, experiences and contexts that shape GRP practice in countries; and political and economic factors more broadly.

The findings are especially meaningful when disaggregated by business size, sectors or industries and stage in value chains, as done for South Africa. On the public sector side, such analyses covered issues including processes during tendering, bid evaluation, award and payment and the social, political, cultural and other nuances shaping public procurement (Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa). On the private sector side, the analysis was structured around supply chains (Pakistan, South Africa).



## Capacity

This section will go over the key threads that are common in the reports reviewed from the seven countries with respect to capacity. First, it addresses

the capacities of procurement organizations in the public and private sectors; and second, it discusses the capacities of women and women's enterprises. Because capacity is such a cross-cutting area, the summary will be organized by the same headings the main report is structured around: institutional frameworks (institutions); relationships among different stakeholders (partnerships); data (evidence); and the capabilities of buyers and suppliers (capacity).

12 Appendix 5 sets out each COs' start-up strategies and partners for collaboration.

13 For example, the South Africa CO "has targeted 25,000 WoEs [women-owned enterprises] for support in accessing formal procurement chains over the next five years [2020-2025], and 15,000 within the next three years—from 2020 to 2022. [...] The emphasis is on entry points which enable high impact, easier entry to market/ease of starting business/ease of doing business" (Mackie et al. 2019, p. 14).

14 For additional information on how the COs have designed their research on GRP, see Appendix 6, which identifies the lead question investigated in each study, and Appendix 8, which details the topics that the COs asked the research to examine.



Panel discussion at the launch of the study report in Rwanda. From L-R, Ms Fatou Lo, UN Women Country Representative, Ms Francoise Mubiliigi (RWCE), Mr Augustin Seminega (MINECOFIN – RPPA) and Dr Monique Nsanzabaganwa (NFNV). 2019. Photo: UN Women/Tumaini Ochieng

## Capacity gaps for procurement organizations



### INSTITUTIONS

The lack of requirements for and enforcement of accountability on GRP, with no sanctions for failure, can be problematic for WOBs. Also, the absence of mechanisms for suppliers to lodge grievances can prevent women from learning why they did not get a contract and how to improve for their next bid. Arguably, procurement entities can reproduce the gendered segmentation of markets by associating women’s businesses only with sectors where women are typically present in larger numbers. Finally, it is worth noting that gender imbalances in procurement staff may mean that GRP is considered a ‘women’s’ issue as opposed to a mainstream issue that impacts everyone.

Corruption in procurement, where present, has gendered implications specifically detrimental to women suppliers. For example, in Nigeria, public procurement is closely linked to “political partisanship and informal patriarchal rules”<sup>15</sup>. Party financiers, chieftains and their proxies commonly dominate public procurement based on the political party in power. Consequently,

even when WOBs meet the qualification for public tenders, “informal rules and partisan interests still tend to reinforce their exclusion and limited participation because very few women have ‘heavyweight’ status within party structures”<sup>16</sup>.



### PARTNERSHIPS

In terms of relationships, reliance on pre-existing, exclusionary procurement networks to choose suppliers is common. Such physical and virtual networks are economic-cultural and interrelated. They are often closed, in that they tend to exclude those that are not actively connected to existing networks because buyers look first at those they know. The conditions for access are more challenging for micro and small WOBs compared to medium WOBs. In South Africa, white women have a small advantage over Black women in accessing such networks<sup>17</sup>. In addition, the private sector often requires an in-person pitch, which many women find very difficult to do due to cultural reasons and low self-confidence.<sup>18</sup>

15 UNW Nigeria 2018.

16 Ibid.

17 UNW SAMCO 2019, p. 85.

18 Ibid., pp. 59–60.



## EVIDENCE

With respect to data, there can also be problems with data collection, monitoring and evaluation on gender in an entity's procurement or in its support to WOBs. For example, some institutions have set up no data systems at all, while others lack a unified framework for this. Gender-disaggregated data typically fails to systematically integrate intersectionality. Additionally, public and private actors may not agree to share their data publicly to protect information they consider to be internal or confidential.

Some procuring entities lack knowledge on women's businesses and the country context for women entrepreneurs. In many countries, there is a dearth of easily usable information about existing women-owned suppliers. More broadly, there may be a lack of good-quality data on WOBs. There are also few easy and reliable ways for procuring entities to check that businesses are really owned and run by women. Sometimes staff, including senior staff and operational management, do not have an understanding of GRP or do not have the tools to implement it, such as integrated financial management information systems. Additionally some procuring entities provide no support or set conditions to access it that are out of reach for many WOBs.



## CAPACITY GAPS: BUYERS

The above challenges can be present at all stages of the procurement process. For example, at the stage of tender calls, buying entities often fail to adapt their channels of communication, language and wording (in procurement documents and even support services) to make them accessible to women.

At the stage of (pre-)qualification, many financial and non-financial conditions and requirements structurally hamper WOBs, especially the ones run by the most disadvantaged women. As part of this, financial requirements for bid security and performance guarantees constitute a particular obstacle.

In Kenya, WOBs name the following as punitive obstacles:<sup>19</sup>

- Having statements proving an active bank account, which is difficult for disadvantaged businesswomen who rarely keep their earnings in their accounts and instead spend them largely to feed their children
- Having won previous contracts, a problem for women with a new business
- Having audited accounts
- Offering adequate reference letters.

During tender evaluation, the lack of information of the status of applications discourages a number of WOBs from bidding (South Africa). During the course of the contract, technical specifications that change, or that are too vague, and a lack of follow-up and communication on the part of procuring entities all pose problems for women entrepreneurs (Senegal). After completion of a contract, delays in payment are a major problem for WOBs and deter them from engaging in procurement, including in GRP initiatives.



*A 'Buyer-Seller Forum' in Kenya, where micro-entrepreneurs were trained on business management and linked to service providers including finance. 2021.*

*Photo: UN Women/David Mugo*

<sup>19</sup> Kiriti Nganga 2017.



## CAPACITY GAPS: SUPPLIERS

A full accounting of the capacity issues faced by women's businesses is far beyond the scope of this report; however, the studies confirm some common knowledge about the challenges of entrepreneurship and business ownership for women.

For example, dominant sexist norms and behaviours limit and constrain many women's autonomy when setting up and running a business.

These translate into real challenges for women when it comes to accessing procurement.

Women—especially more disadvantaged women—do not know enough about how procurement works, often leaving them dependent on men for this.

“[E]ntrenched traditional and patriarchal perceptions restrict women's mobility, limit social networks, discriminate based on gender or marital status, impose restrictions based on reproductive and domestic responsibilities, hamper decision-making powers and time availability hence strictly limiting their economic activity and growth of businesses. These factors force WOBs to operate in the informal, lower value-added service sectors and home-based enterprises producing specifically for intermediaries. The situation results in limiting WOBs' access to financial literacy, business skills and business acumen crucial for sustainable growth and many women fail to increase the scale of their enterprises enough to trigger significant economic renewal”.<sup>20</sup>

Sometimes women's businesses lack capacity for effective bidding strategies, such as setting competitive pricing or using collective bids through collaborations or joint ventures. Further, women's lack of awareness often applies to GRP, GRP opportunities and GRP-related support.

In Senegal, women entrepreneurs' widespread ignorance about the applicable rules and procedures dramatically lessens the impact of the legal provision for affirmative procurement, as this:<sup>21</sup>

- Prevents many women entrepreneurs from bidding for tenders they would have had high chances of winning
- Leads some women entrepreneurs to submit bids that are of poor quality
- Exposes women entrepreneurs who have won a tender to penalties and sanctions for not complying with the specifications of the tender.

Lastly, women make less use of the recourses available to them in procurement procedures, especially for grievance and redress.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> UNW Pakistan n.d.-a, p. 13.

<sup>21</sup> KPMG Sénégal 2018, p. 3. This law ( the 28 July 2008 Act on Promoting and Developing SMEs) was repealed and replaced by the orientation law 2020-02 of 7 January 2020. A new law on public-private partnerships in Senegal (Law No. 2021-23 of 2 March 2021) through its implementing decree (Decree 2021-1443 of 27 October 2021) provides for a 2 per cent margin of preference for women's enterprises. In the same vein, a draft small business act for the access of women and young people to public procurement through a quota of 15 per cent has been drawn up and awaits validation.

<sup>22</sup> UNW Pakistan n.d.-a, p. 7.



## SYSTEMATIC GAPS

In addition to capacity gaps on the buyers' and suppliers' side, there are significant gaps, obstacles and poor practices in the products and services that public and private financial institutions offer women entrepreneurs. Formal banking and financing (e.g., through banks and credit support) are not well designed for women entrepreneurs—especially SMEs. Instead, women entrepreneurs have to rely more on their personal contacts for funds. This is noted by nearly all the country studies. In some countries, even public systems to support financing and credit for enterprises are out of reach for WOBs. Some financial institutions also exhibit gender discrimination against women entrepreneurs (Rwanda).

In Kenya, public authorities have failed to allocate funds to capacity-building on the AGPO initiative for the suppliers concerned.<sup>23</sup>

In Nigeria, the Bank of Industry offers financial and technical support to micro and small businesses to promote their growth. However, support “comes with stringent criteria such as proof of property ownership”.<sup>24</sup>

In South Africa, organizations tasked with supporting WOBs seem to have neglected those in rural areas, failing to provide them with resources and instead concentrating resources on metropolitan areas. Public programmes for enterprise development, including for small businesses, are not filling the many gaps throughout the value chain for either small businesses or WOBs.<sup>25</sup>

23 Kiriti Nganga 2017.

24 UNW Nigeria 2018.

25 UNW SAMCO 2019.

# 3. OPPORTUNITIES

Despite the challenges previously described, there are positive signs. First, women-owned businesses typically confirm they are willing to participate in some form of procurement, though whether this is in the public or private sector varies. Second, well-established WOBs offer a proven record of sustainability, revenue generation and profit.

In Pakistan, many WOBs surveyed that “have grown beyond the start-up stage” have proven to be sustainable, to generate revenue and to be profitable, although structural and social barriers have held them back from growing as fast as businesses owned by men.<sup>26</sup>

In South Africa, women entrepreneurs with at least three years of experience in industry and enterprise are the most successful. They are formalized, have suitable business models, are industry compliant and are certified at level 1 under BB BEE. Their entrepreneurial attitudes and confidence are strong.<sup>27</sup>

Indeed, in a number of countries, well-established WOBs have the same profitability as well-established men-owned businesses.

In Pakistan, among a sample of comparable women- and men-owned companies in sectors of interest to Procter & Gamble Pakistan, WOBs had, on average, a similar profitability rate of 22 per cent.<sup>28</sup>

Moreover, a number of well-established WOBs have the willingness and potential to grow.

In Pakistan, most of the well-established WOBs surveyed were eager to grow through collaborations. They also exhibited the characteristics to do so, including improved business practices, social and family support, appetite for risk and relevant professional and academic backgrounds.<sup>29</sup>

In South Africa, findings from one survey show that the majority of respondent WOBs were interested in joint ventures with other WOBs.<sup>30</sup>



*Under UN Women’s project, Building Social Cohesion through Effective Women’s Leadership, women from Thatta, Sindh meet at the newly established ‘Peace Cafe’, a safe place to mingle plus display and sell their embroideries and handicrafts. Pakistan, 2021.*

*Photo: UN Women Pakistan/Anam Abbas*

26 UNW Pakistan n.d.-b, p. 15.

27 UNW SAMCO 2019, p. 85.

28 UNW Pakistan, n.d.-b, p. 6.

29 UNW Pakistan, n.d.-a, p. 6.

30 UNW SAMCO 2017, p. 36



Third, in some countries, buyer entities that actually practise gender-responsive procurement (GRP) report that the quality of work and the skills that WOBs provide are as good as those from men-owned businesses—although in other contexts, buyers report the reverse, as noted elsewhere in this report.

In Brazil, large companies using GRP reported that they encountered no gender-related barriers to buying from WOBs in terms of the quality or competences provided.<sup>31</sup>

Fourth, greater use of information and communication technology (ICT), especially through e-procurement, has the potential to facilitate WOBs' access to procurement because it can streamline the processes involved and help curb corruption<sup>32</sup>. However, ICT excludes more disadvantaged women, such as those with no computers

and no easy or reliable Internet access. In addition, some applications of e-procurement can structurally inhibit GRP. For example, in electronic reverse auctions: “Because of the focus on price, non-price factors [...] may be given insufficient attention. Such factors may include aspects like delivery times, socio-economic considerations, experience of tenderers and similar aspects”<sup>33</sup>.

Fifth, in some countries, actors supporting GRP have created databases of WOBs.

In South Africa, by late 2017, women and industry associations had documented and created a database of 304 WOBs that were fully compliant and ready to do business with the Government. This was achieved with support from UN Women. The database was then shared with the Department of Energy.<sup>34</sup>



*Lessons learned sharing mission for women to see moringa production grown in the backyard of a WOB, South Africa, 2021.*  
Photo: UN Women/Agness Phiri

31 FGVcelog 2019b, p. 2.

32 UNW SAMCO 2017, pp. 5 and 33.

33 De la Harpe 2012 cited in Edinger et al. 2017. An electronic reverse auction involves the presentation by tenderers, suppliers or contractors of successively lowered bids over a scheduled period of time and the automatic evaluation of bids.

34 UNW SAMCO 2017, p. 36.

# 4. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROCUREMENT

## Public procurement

Women-owned businesses generally have negative views on, or lesser preference towards, public-sector buyers compared to private-sector buyers. For example, in South Africa, WOBs perceive doing business with the State as “onerous and risky”.<sup>35</sup>

First, in multiple countries, WOBs strongly perceive the public procurement process as corrupt and rigged.

In South Africa, ‘Tenderpreneurship’ is seen as common—this local term refers to a person using “their political connections to secure government contracts for personal advantage”.<sup>36</sup>

In Nigeria, public procurement is closely linked to “political partisanship and informal patriarchal rules”.<sup>37</sup>

Second, there can be intense competition on public tenders. In some countries, award decisions on public tenders emphasize price, not the quality of deliverables. This lesser attention to quality can also continue to be a problem during contract performance. In this context, whereas the opportunity costs are higher, the chances of repeat business are low since suppliers’ track record is not a priority, as noted on South Africa.<sup>38</sup>

Third, a recurring theme on public procurement is that payments are often late and unpredictable, as flagged, for example, in South Africa.<sup>39</sup>

## Private procurement

The studies found positive though mixed results and impacts of gender-responsive procurement in the private sector. WOBs often have positive views, or a preference, towards working for private-sector buyers compared to public-sector buyers, particularly because payments are timelier and more reliable and because there are chances for repeat business and growth.

However, private companies’ formal commitments to GRP are not enough. By themselves, general commitments to sustainability or diversity in supply chains often fail to translate into tangible plans and actions.

The study on large companies in Brazil shows that, although many respondent companies had a formal programme for sustainability or diversity, only 10 per cent of them had developed a programme for supplier diversity or initiatives to buy from women-owned suppliers.<sup>40</sup>

An increasing number of procurement departments in large companies include compliance and risk management as top priorities and state that sustainable procurement is important, or critically important, to them.<sup>41</sup> In addition, there are business benefits of buying from WOBs.

35 UNW SAMCO 2019, p. xi.

36 Ibid., p. 59.

37 UNW Nigeria 2018.

38 Ibid., pp. 59–60.

39 Ibid., pp. x, 53–54 and 59–60.

40 FGVcelog 2019b, p. 2.

41 Ibid., pp. 4–5.

The study on Brazil's large companies concludes that buying from WOBs "can result in positive benefits and does not increase costs".<sup>42</sup> A significant majority of companies that already implemented policies to buy from WOBs reported that this:

- Increased employee satisfaction and brand reputation
- Mitigated risks
- Helped develop local suppliers
- Increased business opportunities
- Did not increase costs, i.e., the companies did not spend more with WOBs.

### The case for private sector engagement

In a number of countries, given WOBs' reluctance to engage with public procurement and the greater number of entry points available in the private sector (due, for example, to greater diversity in the goods, works and services procured than in the public sector), private companies are better positioned than public institutions to include WOBs in procurement in the first instance.

In South Africa, small, medium-sized and microenterprises (SMMEs) that are accepted into private-sector programmes for supplier development "have a significantly higher chance of accessing formal procurement".<sup>43</sup> These programmes, which are usually run by very large firms, are by far the most effective means for WOBs to enter private procurement. The top 40 firms on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange account for the bulk of private procurement in the country—and they all have supplier development programmes.<sup>44</sup>

Supplier development programmes work well as an entry point for women's businesses as they offer an enabling environment for small and medium-sized WOBs to access the resources they need to get procurement opportunities. Once WOBs are in a worthwhile supplier development programme that offers ongoing support, and once they deliver on their commitments, "there is a good pipeline, and the potential to grow"<sup>45</sup>.

Finally, large private companies may be well positioned to advocate for GRP through communication and action, given their high visibility in public life in some instances.

Large corporations provide significant opportunities for GRP and can support it by:<sup>46</sup>

- Leading and providing targeted training and non-financial support to WOBs on skills and business practices, including in accounting, marketing and corporate supply chains
- Adopting more inclusive procurement policies and practices, such as "working with their existing suppliers to foster more gender inclusive business practices", engaging prospective women-led suppliers and highlighting opportunities for corporate partnership with them
- Collaborating with formal financial institutions to improve WOBs' access to finance
- Collaborating "with other private and public sector stakeholders to create an enabling environment"
- Leveraging their marketing and advertising to drive "the development of a positive national narrative around women entrepreneurship".

42 FGVcelog 2019b, pp. 2 and 23–25.

43 UNW SAMCO 2019, p. 83.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid., p. 59.

46 UNW Pakistan n.d.-b, pp. 6 and 33.

## Remaining challenges with the private sector

There continue to be challenges with the private sector, however. First, the networks and interactions crucial to getting private procurement are harder for WOBs to access and use. As reported in South Africa, women entrepreneurs find it more difficult in the private than public sector to access the physical and virtual networks that provide information on technical issues and potential procurement opportunities.

Second, it can be extremely difficult for WOBs “to get on to a good supplier development programme” (e.g., in South Africa).<sup>47</sup>

Third, WOBs often find themselves subcontracted, rather than directly contracted, in private companies’ supply chains. Although this has a number of

immediate benefits for the WOBs concerned, it can eventually limit their development if there is no pathway to grow and become a direct supplier. In South Africa, for example, this has happened in supplier development programmes, which often do not provide direct market access. Subcontractors typically supply the supplier development programmes, not the firms themselves.<sup>48</sup>

Fourth, private-sector actors—even those signed up to the WEPs—are loath to share details about their procurement, as observed in Pakistan. This is because companies treat procurement policies, spending and projections, as well as sex-disaggregated databases of registered suppliers, as strictly confidential.<sup>49</sup>



*A Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) meeting in Nairobi. WEPs members discuss and share best practices around principle 5 on enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices (2021).*

*Photo: UN Global Compact/Cynthia Kimilu*

47 UNW SAMCO 2019, p. 59.

48 Ibid., pp. 59–60.

49 UNW Pakistan n.d.-a, p. 50.

# 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The country studies in this report demonstrate the diversity of contexts for practising gender-responsive procurement (GRP). As such, the good practices and recommendations offered here are adaptable to cross-cutting considerations that are country-specific, whether related to factors including race, disability and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexual and queer (LGBTIQ+) issues. The studies also highlight that GRP requires combining and coordinating multiple lines of action: revising the legal, regulatory and policy framework (institutions); continuously raising awareness (partnerships); filling information gaps and ensuring transparency and accountability (data and monitoring); and improving practices and the performance of actors on the supply and demand sides of procurement (capacity).



## Institutions

**Rights-based approaches:** GRP actions must be anchored on human rights and workers rights. For example, for the private sector, the gender strategy of the

Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is founded on gender equality as an enabler of workers' rights. It offers a fully developed theory of change, from root causes and problem to strategies, outcomes and impact.<sup>50</sup> In addition, multiple guides on gender-equitable value chain development can help identify important issues in designing more inclusive interventions.

While many companies are active women's empowerment advocates, the 2020 review of the WEPs for the UN Global Compact offers sobering findings: A mere 4 per cent of respondents tracked the percentage they spend with women-owned businesses (WOBs), and just 3 per cent reported on it publicly. Only 8 per cent had robust due diligence or assessment for suppliers and vendors, and only 6 per cent included gender in auditing protocols, supplier scorecards or other tools to manage supply chains or encouraged "their suppliers to track progress on gender equality"<sup>51</sup>. Similarly, an in-depth study on Coca-Cola Company's 5by20 programme—meant to economically empower 5 million women micro-entrepreneurs across its supply chain by the end of 2020—offers warnings about corporations' rhetoric on "smart economics" and "the business case for gender

equality". The review, based on engagements with programme implementers and participants in Mexico and South Africa, warns that women's precarious labour ends up being presented as entrepreneurship, while concealing the structural causes of poverty and impeding the sustainable development of their businesses.<sup>52</sup>

**Intersectional lens:** Programming should be intersectional, with due account given to the interplay of structural inequalities that combine with gender (e.g., socio-economic class, caste, geography, age, ethnicity, nationality, migration and refugee status and disability). UN Women and procuring entities cannot immediately remedy some of the severe inequalities that prevent the most disadvantaged women suppliers from participating in procurement. However, they can ensure that everything they do has taken into account structures of inequalities, lowered any associated barriers as much as possible and used a transformative approach. For example, while procuring entities cannot immediately help women with little formal education become more literate, they can use plain, concise language in their documents and online information about both procurement and available support, so that literate but less educated women can engage as direct suppliers or as subcontractors.

GRP projects should strive to empower even the most disadvantaged suppliers by ensuring that any support and capacity-building provided to WOBS on procurement

<sup>50</sup> ETI 2018.

<sup>51</sup> UN Global Compact and BSR 2020, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup> Tornhill 2019.

reaches and is tailored to diverse businesses. At the same time, stakeholders should recognize that not all businesses can be suppliers, and it is essential for COs to have typologies that distinguish survival or sustenance enterprises, “steady state enterprises” and high-growth enterprises among WOBs.<sup>53</sup>

In this area, UN Women can learn from successful experiences that have used an intersectional lens. For example, in one province in Canada, efforts to “strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem for and innovative capabilities of diverse women entrepreneurs” suggest three lessons: approaches where “all are welcome” are important; supporting women in mainstream organizations providing entrepreneurship is needed; and enterprise supports that are “women-only, feminist, and women-focused” are valuable.<sup>54</sup>

GRP stakeholders can also strive to make procurement work better for all small businesses. As one study on federal procurement in the United States concluded, firm size is one of two “key determinants of bid likelihood and success rates”<sup>55</sup>. The study found that smaller firms were less likely to submit bids than larger firms and less likely to be successful, regardless of the gender of the owners<sup>56</sup>. In response, recent reports from countries such as Canada can offer pointers to COs on advising public entities about making public procurement work for SMEs, including SMEs owned by women.

Similarly, partners’ programming should dedicate more attention and action to developing sector-specific programming to tackle the effects of the gender segmentation of businesses by sectors. As the study on federal procurement in the United States concluded, sector is the second determinant of bid success rate<sup>57</sup>. The status quo, in which buyers choose the lowest-priced bids over gender equity, favours sectors where men-owned businesses are concentrated, such as goods producers (e.g., infrastructure), construction, defence and ICT, whereas the sectors where WOBs are concentrated systemically impede their bidding success.<sup>58</sup>

It is thus important to be aware of sectors where women suppliers are currently concentrated and enable them to move to a different stage in the value chain if they wish. One good example is women’s roles as food producers and entrepreneurs. Oxfam International offers practical advice on what private businesses can do and the “significant business case for food companies to invest more in supporting and purchasing food commodities from female smallholders”<sup>59</sup>. Simultaneously, COs should aim to help women suppliers enter fields dominated by men-owned businesses.

**Tackle corruption:** Governments should tackle corruption in procurement while simultaneously strengthening their laws on the protection of women to put a stop to financial or sexual corruption or favouritism in public procurement. They should also strengthen the ethics code of contracting authorities, evaluate its application and regularly train officials in good ethical practices. Such policies should address both general and gender-based forms of corruption in procurement. On a problem such as sexual extortion, this means having appropriate legal frameworks as well as policies and programmes on awareness-raising, reporting mechanisms and data and research.<sup>60</sup>

Advocates can consider framing the argument on procurement reforms for GRP as a way for politicians, public officials and civil servants to mitigate risks. For example, the ‘anti-corruption risk assessment’ proposed by the UN Global Compact presents anti-corruption reforms as protecting, rather than hunting down, public servants and institutions. It emphasizes that the laws about procurement set the norm, help reduce the institutional factors of corruption and therefore also protect “public servants by minimizing their vulnerability to corruption”<sup>61</sup>. This may be helpful in countries such as Nigeria, where the fear of closing corruption loopholes has led politicians and civil servants to significantly resist the Public Procurement Act.

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53 See, for example, Maheshwari et al. 2020.

54 Orser, Elliott et al., 2019, p. i.

55 Ibid., p. 508.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid., p. 510.

59 Kirk 2012, p. 9

60 Feigenblatt 2020.

61 UNW Nigeria, 2018, pp. 17–18.

**Sustainability and resilience:** Finally, programming should be integrated with efforts toward sustainability and resilience with sensitivity to trends like violent conflicts, public health crises and climate change.



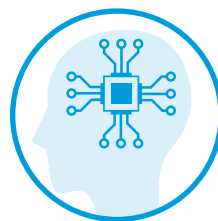
## Partnerships

Advocacy should involve actors with actual influence over the procurement areas concerned. For example, in Nigeria, given the deep politicization of government procurement, GRP cannot be realized “by law reforms only, but will also require identifying, renegotiating, and navigating the politics behind the reality”. Thus UN Women’s advocacy “needs to include not just legislators, but also political party leaders and heads of (specific) ministries, departments and agencies”.<sup>62</sup>

Strengthening the capacities of women’s associations and industry associations is helpful, so they can conduct evidence-based advocacy towards public or private buyers and procurement associations. Additionally, mobilizing and organizing WOBs to demand change using public awareness campaigns is a key strategy.<sup>63</sup> Another important strategy is fostering champions for GRP among procuring entities that establish and implement industry guidance or codes on procurement.<sup>64</sup> Procuring entities should institutionalize collective and individual accountability for GRP, especially at senior levels.<sup>65</sup>

Ensuring collaboration, coordination and communication between and within public procuring entities can entail designating one institution within the State as the leading entity in charge of achieving the set objectives on GRP.<sup>66</sup> To achieve a multi-sectoral approach between and within government departments,

planning, finance and procuring departments should coordinate, communicate and cooperate with each other.<sup>67</sup> This is also helpful to anchor the case for GRP in a country’s macroeconomic policies by involving ministries and departments such as those on finance, planning and SMEs.<sup>68</sup>



## Evidence

To be effective, procuring organizations and stakeholders involved should ensure that outcomes, results and impacts are publicly reported, monitored and evaluated. Procuring entities need to move towards a culture of gender-focused audits<sup>69</sup>. Financial institutions too should be encouraged to gather, analyse and communicate gender-disaggregated data about their clients.<sup>70</sup> Evaluation by the procuring entities themselves should be complemented by reviews conducted by expert third-party intermediaries and academics to produce objective and rigorous evidence and ensure that private and public initiatives for GRP are not “little more than political and public relations posturing”.<sup>71</sup>

Publicity and integrity of data and knowledge are all the more important given that a number of powerful public and private procurement entities have refused to open up access to their GRP initiatives or their data. For example, academics who wanted to research Coca-Cola’s 5by20 programme in South Africa and Goldman Sachs’ 10,000 Women in Rwanda were denied access. These programmes of ‘transnational business feminism’ “revealed themselves as hypervisible yet largely inaccessible and also as deeply protective of their practices and of the knowledge produced about them”.<sup>72</sup>

62 Ibid., p. 18.

63 Ibid., p. 21

64 UNW SAMCO 2019, p. 86.

65 Ibid., p. 8.

66 KPMG Sénégal 2018, p. 4.

67 Kiriti Nganga 2017, pp. 12–13.

68 UNW Nigeria 2018, p. 21.

69 UNW SAMCO 2017, p. 37.

70 UNW Senegal 2018, p. 5.

71 Orser, Riding et al. 2019, p. 513.

72 Allison et al. 2019, p. 62.



## Capacity

### DEMAND SIDE

According to the country studies, it is essential to specifically target not only an organization's procurement procedures and tools but also its wider organizational practices. Procuring entities should simplify and streamline the procedures, processes, documentation and IT tools in their procurement, including improving payments to suppliers so that they are paid on time. This may require ring-fencing the funds for payment, to prevent their reallocation and having procuring entities pay interest on delayed payments<sup>73</sup>. It also involves putting in place systems to connect buyers and suppliers.

Procuring entities should create mechanisms or tools to connect buyers and WOBs as suppliers by gathering and sharing gender-disaggregated data on women and men suppliers and supporting the creation of supplier databases.

The study from Pakistan suggests that an online one-stop platform could provide support with:

- Certification of WOBs
- An online WOB supplier's directory
- A networking platform for procurers and suppliers
- Supporting WOBs with their business registration and other legal obligations
- Tailor-made capacity-building of WOBs on effective tendering, validated by certifications
- Capacity-building of buyers on GRP.

Meet-the-buyer sessions can also connect buyers and WOBs suppliers in person.

Stakeholders working together must consult closely with diverse WOBs to implement these recommendations, to ensure that changes are actually useful to WOBs and do not reinforce the sectoral segmentation of

businesses.<sup>74</sup> For example, evidence about the effects of IT tools (e-procurement and e-commerce more broadly) on gender equality is mixed.<sup>75</sup>

E-commerce is not a silver bullet. In the context of digital services, many women entrepreneurs' possibilities are bound by the platforms available to them. Digital solutions may reduce some of the discrimination women face as business owners in face-to-face interactions; likewise, reducing the number of intermediaries for a transaction enables women to reap more benefits from this.<sup>76</sup> Yet, WOBs struggle when it comes to actions such as securing licences and intellectual property rights, negotiating customs procedures, navigating logistics costs, particularly in rural areas, and accessing appropriate finance because of the high barriers to entry; firms in developing economies face even greater barriers.<sup>77</sup>

E-commerce platforms are controlled mainly by giant companies, which can put smaller companies such as WOBs at a disadvantage and create extreme power disparities. This could put more pressure on women's unpaid care work; drive women's reliance on the gig economy, which is precarious; reinforce trade inequalities between the Global North and Global South; and enable companies to extract and abuse data from women-owned companies.<sup>78</sup>

These strands of actions thus require wider organizational changes. To address this, stakeholders can unite around the Women's Empowerment Principles, through which companies can advance gender equality and women's empowerment both internally and in their supply chains.<sup>79</sup> Actors in the GRP space can update and localize the Corporate Guide to Gender-Responsive Procurement<sup>80</sup> for a comprehensive set of steps businesses can take to improve their supplier diversity programmes and so on. Other guides exist, such as a recent one from Femeconomy that identifies nine stages to creating gender equality through procurement and offers ideas on each of them: business case; baseline analysis; stakeholder engagement; criteria and evaluation framework; pilot programme; policy review and embedding the strategy; implementation plan and key

73 Kiriti Nganga 2017, p. 12.

74 Orser, Riding et al. 2019, p. 512.

75 See, for example, Gurumurthy et al. 2019a; ITC 2017; Sicat et al. 2020.

76 ICT 2017.

77 Suominen 2018.

78 Gurumurthy et al. 2019b.

79 See Empower Women n.d.

80 UN Women 2017a.



milestones; embedding GRP in organizational systems and performance evaluation; external communications; and ongoing benchmarking.<sup>81</sup>

Some provisions in existing, gender-neutral frameworks on procurement can be leveraged towards GRP<sup>82</sup>. For example, in Nigeria, the commitment to equity and efficiency in existing procurement law and policy provides a starting point to demand some gender accountability.

To facilitate organizational change, procuring entities can turn to the internal expertise they already have among their staff in human resources and, if available, among staff tasked with diversity. These professionals can apply their skills to supplier diversity instead of leaving this to the procurement department alone. They are likely to have relevant expertise in building diversity programmes and can, for example, increase employees' knowledge and support of supplier diversity by including this in employee trainings. They may also have business contacts belonging to disadvantaged groups, who could "facilitate networking and business relationships between the company's procurement department and diverse suppliers"<sup>83</sup>. Another key area to link with GRP is sustainability and enterprise risk management departments, as found in Brazil.



*Presidential Task Team capacity-building workshop for women's enterprises in Limpopo Province. UN Women South Africa Programme Manager with partner from SEDA. Photo: UN Women/Ayanda Mvimbi*

## Supply side

Country actors supporting GRP should help connect WOBs with capacity-building on procurement given by public, private and non-profit organizations in the form of trainings, mentoring, coaching and fully integrated supplier development programmes. They should leave no disadvantaged suppliers behind by ensuring that any support and capacity-building provided reaches and is tailored to diverse WOBs, including the more disadvantaged ones and SMEs.

They should also help enhance WOBs' financial capacities. This includes advocacy to transform financing services so they meet women entrepreneurs' needs and provide credit support, especially in rural areas; collaborating with banks to develop tailored products for SMEs;<sup>84</sup> and considering creating a one-stop platform to connect WOBs, procuring entities and financial institutions.<sup>85</sup> Support should also aim to help women be more comfortable with navigating the financial process, as their perceptions in this area affect their willingness to seek financing and to then bid on procurement.<sup>86</sup>

Actors supporting GRP should also enhance WOBs' social capital. This entails actively linking women entrepreneurs into existing procurement networks, supporting WOBs in registering on procurement platforms, having women's and industry associations connect WOBs through a network on affirmative procurement<sup>87</sup>, mentoring or coaching WOBs on procurement and creating a platform for WOBs to collaborate and build up their networks<sup>88</sup>. COs should also combine supporting women entrepreneurs' self-confidence with giving them accurate views on the opportunities and challenges of accessing public and private procurement. One reason to do so, according to one study on small-sized businesses in the United States, is that even when there is no evidence of discrimination in access to capital, women entrepreneurs' perception of discrimination makes them temper their financing and consequently limits their growth and their attempts to access procurement.<sup>89</sup>

81 Femeconomy and 30% Club 2020.

82 UNW Nigeria 2018, p. 8.

83 FGVcelog 2019a.

84 UNW Pakistan n.d.-a, p. 49.

85 Ibid., p. 8.

86 Rasheed, 2004.

87 UNW SAMCO 2017, pp. 35–36.

88 UNW Pakistan n.d.-a, pp. 7 and 48.

89 Rasheed, 2004.

Moreover, actors for GRP should improve WOBs' access to, and positioning in, local, national or international markets. For example, they can help WOBs to have better market information; focus on expanding industries (e.g. services) that are more accessible to them<sup>90</sup>; enter supply chains through supplier and enterprise development<sup>91</sup>; develop tailored business models, such as joint ventures, partnerships and subcontracting<sup>92</sup>; form national or regional value chains; and adopt niches<sup>93</sup>.

The aim should be to empower WOBs to have the choice to be either direct or subcontracted suppliers. Each of these positions comes with advantages and drawbacks, and different WOBs will need or want different pathways. In particular, experience from Canada and the United States suggests that, for SMEs, "subcontracting is as difficult as contracting directly with governments"<sup>94</sup>.

In addition, actors for GRP can also help WOBs achieve the right balance between integration and autonomy in relationship to the supply chain. This will be particularly important for WOBs that start out with one large business (often owned by men) as their main client and for WOBs who become regular subcontractors for a major contractor to a large business (which may also be owned by men). Retaining independence from businesses not owned by women matters in itself for the women involved and also because it is one of the criteria for businesses to keep qualifying as WOBs<sup>95</sup>. In addition, a notable study from the United States emphasizes that, for businesses owned by racial minorities to survive, they must have diverse clientele and avoid over-relying on public procurement<sup>96</sup>. The same advice is likely to apply to WOBs.



Participant during the fifth session of "Training of Women Entrepreneurs in Public Procurement" at IRMAP (Institut de Régulation des Marchés Publics) institute in Dakar, Senegal, 2021. The training is part of UN Women's "WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS FINANCE INITIATIVE" (WE-FI) programme, which aims to remove financial and non-financial barriers for women-led and women-owned SMEs.

Photo: UN Women/Adriana Borra

90 UNW SAMCO 2019, p. 85.

91 Ibid., p. 85.

92 UNW Nigeria, 2018, p. 32.

93 Orser, Riding et al. 2019, p. 495.

94 UNGM n.d.

95 Orser, Riding et al. 2019, p. 495.

96 UNGM n.d.

# 6. CONCLUSION

This report synthesized 11 studies produced by UN Women on gender-responsive procurement from seven countries. The key takeaway for actors who are planning and implementing GRP interventions is that GRP can be adapted depending on several contextual factors.

Institutions, as expressed through the legal framework in the country, provide the shape that GRP can take. The countries studied built GRP norms strategically. Strong affirmative action policies, for example, may offer fruitful entry points for GRP, but these are likely to be ineffective without accountability mechanisms such as targets and quotas. Countries such as Pakistan, where procurement law does not have a gender component, may require other types of institutional interventions. This is where data come in.

Data and evidence are the fuel of GRP. If a country or company does not have a GRP programme, it is possible to find other possible points of engagement, but there are likely to be challenges if there is no persuasive evidence and data that supports the 'business case' for GRP. Data and evidence also help monitor interventions to hold stakeholders accountable and assess efforts to introduce and implement GRP. These data and evidence will go to waste without relationships and partnerships to help pave the way for advocacy and doubled up efforts.

Partnerships among actors are the drivers of GRP. Many actors who play multiple roles in markets, value chains and societies must be coordinated to implement effective GRP actions. By definition, a GRP programme requires engaging with women's civil society, such as women's business organizations as well as with gender experts with local knowledge who can guide policy, advocacy and action. However, partnerships take time to build. Organizations such as UN Women with strong networks are well placed to play a convening role, bringing together the entire ecosystem of players in the GRP landscape to work together for collective action.

Capacity is the engine of GRP. Without this force of momentum, GRP will not be possible. It is important to acknowledge that not all players yet know how to practically operationalize the vision of GRP, and women's enterprises are not always equipped to

do business at the cost and quantities necessary to compete. For this reason, capacity building is needed on both the demand and supply sides. On the demand side, capacity must be improved to create effective institutions. Furthermore, it is essential to build an evidence base and monitoring system, create supplier development opportunities for women suppliers by partnering with other organizations and put in place mechanisms to increase capacity to implement GRP. This could include investing in supplier databases and streamlining payment systems that reduce transaction costs for both buyers and suppliers.

On the supply side, there are many barriers that must be surmounted for women to be on a level playing field when it comes to securing contracts. Women are constrained by institutions and norms that view them as inferior to men and thus they often do not have the same benefits of property rights, access to the paid labour market and equal treatment when it comes to obtaining loans and accessing business networks. Evidence and data about even the most marginalized women in value chains should be collected, or they will be invisible and it would be difficult to understand, promote and respond to their needs which are different than the needs of women who have more sustainable and formal businesses. Relationships must be facilitated for women to join business networks to gain access to communities and networks that will help them to flourish. Finally, they must have access to skills upgrading that is practical and relevant to their situation.

To conclude, institutions, evidence, partnerships and capacity combined have been shown to be effective in the countries studied as a way to economically empower women in a transformative way. Development partners can, through gender-responsive procurement, improve the material realities of women and create an enabling environment for gender equality and women's empowerment.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1

### Overview of the 11 documents studied in this report

Country studied	No. of reports	References
Brazil	2	FGVcelog (Centro de Excelência em Logística e Supply Chain). 2019a. "Supplier Gender Diversity in Supply Chains: Survey." Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo (FGV EAESP) in partnership with UN Women Brazil Country Office, Sao Paolo.
		FGVcelog (Centro de Excelência em Logística e Supply Chain). 2019b. "Supplier Gender Diversity in Supply Chains Report 1: Survey Results." Draft. Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo (FGV EAESP) in partnership with UN Women Brazil Country Office, Sao Paolo.
Kenya	1	Kiriti Nganga, T. 2017. "Kenya: Assessment of Access to Government Public Procurement Opportunities for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities – Final Report." UN Women Kenya Country Office, Nairobi.
Nigeria	1	UNW Nigeria (UN Women Nigeria Country Office). 2018. "Women Entrepreneurs' Access to Public Procurement in Nigeria." Baseline Study. UN Women Nigeria Country Office, Abuja.
Pakistan	2	UNW Pakistan (UN Women Pakistan Country Office). n.d.-a. "Stimulating Women's Entrepreneurship through Gender Responsive Procurement in the Public and Private Sector." UN Women for Procter & Gamble Pakistan, Karachi.
		UNW Pakistan (UN Women Pakistan Country Office). n.d.-b. "Supporting P&G in Finding Potential Women Owned Businesses." Mapping Report. UN Women for Procter & Gamble Pakistan, Karachi.
Rwanda	1	UNW Rwanda (UN Women Rwanda). 2017. "Study on Gender Responsive Procurement in Rwanda." New Faces New Voices Rwanda Chapter; Gender Monitoring Office, UN Rwanda; and UN Women Rwanda Country Office, Kigali.
Senegal	1	KPMG Sénégal. 2018. "Évaluation du dispositif de discrimination positive en faveur des entreprises des femmes dans l'accès aux marchés publics au Sénégal [Evaluation of the mechanism of affirmative action for women's businesses in access to public procurement in Senegal]." Final Report NDS/DSDS/OSF/2018/03/1510. KPMG Sénégal for UN Women Senegal Country Office, Dakar.
South Africa	3	Edinger, H., N. Magau, J. Nkume and J. Henz. 2017. "The Status of Affirmative Procurement in South Africa: A Supply-side Perspective of Women-Owned Businesses in Public Procurement." Final Draft. Deloitte and University of Pretoria for UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO), Pretoria.
		Mackie, G., C. Mollmann and J. Rowe-Setz. 2019. "Develop a Typology for Women Owned Enterprises in South Africa in the Context of Increasing Access to Private and Public Procurement Opportunities in South Africa." Final Report SAMCO/RFP/ADM2018/005). Gender Research Alliance for UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO), Pretoria.
		UNW SAMCO (UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office). 2019. "Implementation Guidelines for Gender Responsive Preferential Procurement in South Africa's Public Sector." Draft. UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO), Pretoria.

APPENDIX 2.

Definitions of GRP in UN Women’s 11 research documents

Country	Ref.	Definition of GRP
Brazil	FGVcelog 2019a, 2019b	None stated as such Reference to WEPs and to supply chain diversity and sustainability Supplier diversity is “the purchasing of services and goods from minority suppliers (Adobor and McMullen 2007), which includes women-owned business enterprises” (p. 4)
Kenya	Kiriti Nganga 2017	None stated as such Reference to “affirmative action targeting women entrepreneurs” (no definition given)
Nigeria	UNW Nigeria 2018	“[T]he selection of services, goods, and civil works that considers their impact on gender equality and women’s empowerment (Chin 2017)”
Pakistan	UNW Pakistan n.d.-a	“[T]he sustainable selection of services, goods or works that takes into account the impact on gender equality and women’s empowerment, and actively seeks to reduce barriers to entry for women’s businesses to benefit from business opportunities” (UNGM n.d.)
	UNW Pakistan n.d.-b	“[T]he sustainable selection of services, goods or works that takes into account the impact on gender equality and women’s empowerment, and actively seeks to reduce barriers to entry for women’s businesses to benefit from business opportunities” (UNGM n.d.)
Rwanda	UNW Rwanda 2017	“[T]he selection of services, goods, and civil works that considers their impact on gender equality and women’s empowerment (Chin 2017)”
Senegal	KPMG Sénégal 2018	None stated as such Quotes from national law about special measures in support of women’s entrepreneurship and of affirmative procurement for WOBs: “specific measures meant to foster the emergence of female entrepreneurship are initiated, in line with the strategy of the Ministry for Female Entrepreneurship. [...] A 15 per cent share of public tenders set aside for recognized SMEs is granted to companies owned by women” (article 33 of the 28 July 2008 Act on Promoting and Developing SMEs)
South Africa		None stated as such Reference to ‘affirmative procurement’ (definition referring to South African Constitution: implementing procurement policies that provide for “categories of preference in the allocation of contracts” and “the protection or advancement of persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination”)
		Reference (without definitions, but citing UN and UN Women publications, among others) to: - gender-smart or gender-responsive procurement in the public sector - gender-responsive or gender-smart procurement and supplier diversity in the private sector  GRP mentioned in passing, defined as “the selection of goods, civil works or services that take into account their impact on gender equality and women’s empowerment” (Chin 2017)
		“The selection of services, goods, and civil works that consider their impact on gender equality and women empowerment” (UNW definition)



APPENDIX 3.

**Main objective of the CO's programming on GRP in the country (implicit or explicit in the 11 studies)**

Country	Ref.	Main objective of the CO's programming
Brazil	FGVcelog 2019a, 2019b	Advance GRP in the supply chain of large private companies in Brazil, with a focus on companies that have signed up to the WEPs (implicit)
Kenya	Kiriti Nganga 2017	Advance GRP in public procurement, taking advantage of the existence of a domestic framework (law, policies, institutions) already in place for GRP (implicit)
Nigeria	Kiriti Nganga 2017	Advance GRP in public procurement, with a focus on increasing the participation of women entrepreneurs and WOBs (explicit)
Pakistan	UNW Pakistan n.d.-a	Advance GRP in public and private procurement, with a focus on increasing the participation of women entrepreneurs and WOBs in procurement done by large entities (explicit)
	UNW Pakistan n.d.-b	Advance GRP in public and private procurement, with a focus on increasing the participation of women entrepreneurs and WOBs in procurement done by large entities (explicit)
Rwanda	UNW Rwanda 2017	Advance GRP in public procurement, with a focus on increasing the participation of women entrepreneurs and WOBs (explicit)
Senegal	KPMG Sénégal 2018	Advance GRP in public procurement, taking advantage of the existence of a domestic framework (law, policies, institutions) already in place for affirmative procurement from women-owned SMEs (implicit)
South Africa	Edinger et al. 2017	Advance GRP in public and private procurement, with a focus on increasing the participation of women entrepreneurs and WOBs in procurement done by large entities, taking advantage of the existence of a domestic framework (law, policies, institutions) already in place for GRP (explicit)
	Mackie et al. 2019	In the private sector, this centres on the supply chain of large private companies, with a focus on companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (explicit)
	UNW SAMCO 2019	

APPENDIX 4.

**CO's theory of change on how UN Women's programming on GRP would broadly work (implicit or explicit in the 11 studies)**

Country	Ref.	Main objective of the CO's programming
Brazil	FGVcelog 2019a, 2019b	Companies changing their internal practices to apply the WEPs and the good practices established in the fields of supplier diversity and sustainable procurement will result in the participation of more WOBs in the companies' supply chains, to the benefit of both the companies and the WOBs (implicit)
Kenya	Kiriti Nganga 2017	With the right support, the domestic Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) initiative will yield even better results in increasing the participation and share of WOBs (including businesses owned by young women or by women with disabilities) in public procurement (implicit)
Nigeria	UNW Nigeria 2018	With the right advocacy and support, Nigerian public authorities (especially at national level) will make their formal framework and their practices of procurement gender-responsive, and WOBs will be able to make use of this to increase their participation and share in public procurement (implicit)
Pakistan	UNW Pakistan n.d-a	<p>A. Overall, for public and private procurement:                      Drawn from UN Women's global strategic plan 2018-2021: "If (1) domestic and international public and private procurement policies and practices are gender-responsive, and if (2) the capacity of women entrepreneurs and their access to finance, networks, information and local infrastructure is strengthened to enable them to grow their businesses; then (3) the gender gap in economic opportunities will be reduced; because (4) women entrepreneurs will benefit more equally from value chains" (p. 15)</p> <p>B. For private procurement by multinational firms such as P&amp;G:                      The combination of P&amp;G's buying power and UN Women's support to potential suppliers will stimulate equal opportunities for women entrepreneurs to access procurement opportunities from large companies. UN Women and P&amp;G have partnered "to deliver the skills and support women need to access procurement opportunities from large companies". The partnership aims to create a demand for goods and services supplied by WOBs by fostering gender-responsive public and private procurement, and a robust supply "by addressing the gender gap in access to entrepreneurial skills and finance" (p. 10)</p>
	UNW Pakistan n.d.-b	
Rwanda	UNW Rwanda 2017	With the right information, dialogue and support, Rwandan public authorities (especially at national level) will make their formal framework and practices of procurement gender-responsive, and WOBs will be able to make use of this to increase their participation and share in public procurement (implicit)
Senegal	KPMG Sénégal 2018	With the right advocacy and support, the domestic framework for affirmative procurement from women-owned SMEs will yield even better results in increasing the participation and share of WOBs in public procurement (implicit)
South Africa	Edinger et al. 2017	With the right support, the domestic framework for affirmative procurement, combined with support to WOBs, will yield even better results in increasing the participation and share of WOBs (including businesses owned by disadvantaged women) in both public and private procurement (implicit)
	Mackie et al. 2019	
	UNW SAMCO 2019	

APPENDIX 5.

**Ways proposed by CO's to start implementing GRP programming in their country, start-up strategies and partners for collaborations (implicit or explicit in the 11 studies)**

Country	Ref.	CO's start-up strategies and partners for collaborations
Brazil	FGVcelog 2019a, 2019b	Close collaboration with large private companies, especially ones committed to the WEPs, to encourage them to adopt and implement the inclusion of WOBs in their supply chains (in both first and second tiers of the supply chain) (implicit)
Kenya	Kiriti Nganga 2017	Close collaborations, primarily with public officials and civil servants as well as with WOBs, to improve how the AGPO initiative works so that it fully achieves its objectives for women suppliers and WOBs (as both direct and subcontracted suppliers) (implicit)
Nigeria	UNW Nigeria 2018	Two strands of close collaborations (implicit): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- with public officials, civil servants and political party leaders: pushing for changes in the formal framework and practices of public procurement</li> <li>- with WOBs: empowering them to seize opportunities in affirmative procurement (focus on women as direct suppliers)</li> </ul>
Pakistan	UNW Pakistan n.d.-a	A. UN Women's WEE interventions (which focuses on excluded women groups in the country) support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policies and plans enhancing women's socio-economic empowerment (including women from marginalized groups and home-based workers)</li> <li>- Women benefit from decent work, income security and socio-economic development</li> </ul> Four strands of close collaborations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- with public officials and civil servants: pushing for changes in the formal framework and practices of public procurement</li> <li>- with large private companies, especially ones committed to the WEPs: encouraging them to adopt and implement the inclusion of WOBs in their supply chains (in both first and second tiers of the supply chain)</li> <li>- with WOBs: empowering them to seize opportunities in affirmative procurement (as both direct and subcontracted suppliers in public procurement and as suppliers in both first and second tiers of private supply chains)</li> <li>- with chambers of commerce, business associations and other relevant bodies: engaging them to support GRP and WOBs</li> </ul> B. For private procurement by multinational companies such as P&G Pakistan (explicit): This mapping study lays "the groundwork for more informed and targeted interventions and support going forward" (p. 10)
Rwanda	UNW Rwanda 2017	Close collaborations with public officials, civil servants, women entrepreneurs, actors promoting gender equality, development actors and other relevant stakeholders to hold dialogues and push for action to make the formal framework and practices of public procurement gender-responsive, while empowering WOBs to better participate in it (as both direct and subcontracted suppliers) (implicit)
Senegal	KPMG Sénégal 2018	Four strands of close collaborations to improve how affirmative procurement from women-owned SMEs works so that it fully achieves its objectives for women suppliers and WOBs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- with public officials and civil servants: pushing for changes in their formal framework and practices</li> <li>- with WOBs: empowering them to seize opportunities in affirmative procurement (as both direct and subcontracted suppliers), consulting them and facilitating their dialogue with public, private and non-profit actors about participation in public procurement</li> <li>- with associations of WOBs: consulting them and facilitating their dialogue with public, private and non-profit actors about participation in public procurement</li> <li>- with the main private and non-profit institutions promoting women's entrepreneurship: pushing for changes in their formal framework and practices</li> </ul>

Country	Ref.	CO's start-up strategies and partners for collaborations
South Africa	Edinger et al. 2017	<p>Four strands of close collaborations (explicit):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- with public officials, and civil servants: pushing for changes in the formal framework and practices of public procurement—"A strategic focus of the SAMCO Flagship Programme is on strengthening the capacity of government institutions and officials to promote gender responsive procurement" (UNW SAMCO 2019, p. 4)</li> <li>- with large private companies: encouraging them to adopt and implement the inclusion of WOBs in their supply chains (in both first and second tiers of the supply chain)</li> <li>- with WOBs: empowering them to seize opportunities in affirmative procurement (as both direct and subcontracted suppliers). UNW SAMCO "has targeted 25,000 WoEs [women-owned enterprises] for support in accessing formal procurement chains over the next five years [2020-2025], and 15,000 within the next three years – from 2020 to 2022. [...] The emphasis is on entry points which enable high impact, easier entry to market/ease of starting business/ease of doing business – this facilitates cost-effective access." (Mackie et al., p. 14)</li> <li>- with chambers of commerce, business associations and other relevant bodies: engaging them to support GRP and WOBs</li> </ul>
	Mackie et al. 2019	
	UNW SAMCO 2019	

#### APPENDIX 6.

#### Lead question investigated in UN Women's 11 research documents

Country	Ref.	Lead question investigated
Brazil	FGVcelog 2019a, 2019b	What are the state of and factors in the participation of WOBs in the supply chains of large companies?
Kenya	Kiriti Nganga 2017	What are the state of and factors in participation in public procurement by businesses owned by women, youth or persons with disabilities?
Nigeria	UNW Nigeria 2018	What are the state of and factors in women entrepreneurs' participation in public procurement?
Pakistan	UNW Pakistan n.d.-a	What are the state of and factors of GRP in the public and private sector, and are they stimulating women's entrepreneurship?
	UNW Pakistan n.d.-b	Which are the existing WOBs that have the capacity to be integrated as suppliers into the corporate supply chain of P&G Pakistan, and how can P&G and other corporations improve accessibility for them?
Rwanda	UNW Rwanda 2017	What are the major challenges faced by WOBs in engaging in public procurement processes, and what areas require policy dialogue and refinements to make public procurement system more gender-responsive?
Senegal	KPMG Sénégal 2018	What are the strengths, weaknesses and effects of the implementation of the 2008 law about affirmative action regarding women-owned SMEs' access to public procurement?
South Africa	Edinger et al. 2017	What are the state of and factors in WOBs' participation in public procurement?
	Mackie et al. 2019	What is the typology of WOBs nationally, with a view to improving their participation in formal public and private procurement chains?
	UNW SAMCO 2019	How can public officials best use policy provisions and regulations on preferential procurement to best implement gender-responsive procurement from women suppliers and WOBs?

APPENDIX 7.

Programming areas and entry points for intervention identified in the 11 documents

Country	Ref.	Programming areas and entry points for intervention identified
Brazil	FGVcelog 2019a, 2019b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving companies' procurement policies and processes, with work to               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. incorporate social issues such as buying from WOBs into the policies and processes (e.g., in requests for information and requests for quotation)</li> <li>b. extend the process to buy from WOBs from an internal focus within the company to the company also asking its own suppliers to increase gender equality in their procurement policies</li> </ol> </li> <li>- Using companies' programmes and initiatives for sustainability, diversity, supplier diversity or buying from WOBs, with work to mainstream these into all functional areas of the companies, especially procurement (against the current lack of take-up in procurement departments)</li> <li>- Helping companies with their processes to identify the gender and diversity of their first- and second-tier suppliers (helping companies go from not measuring this at all, or only vaguely, to mapping their supply base, to identifying the WOBs in their supplier database, including among second-tier suppliers)</li> <li>- Work to gain support from companies' top management, which is essential to adopting initiatives for sustainability or supplier diversity</li> <li>- Making the case for GRP—both the benefits of doing it (e.g., business case or values-based case) and the risks of not doing it (e.g., public or customer pressures, brand reputation and risk mitigation)</li> <li>- Identifying third parties (private or non-governmental organizations) that companies find useful to help them buy from WOBs</li> </ul>
Kenya	Kiriti Nganga 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legislation and policies (including to further ease the requirements to register to AGPO and to bid)</li> <li>- Anti-corruption action</li> <li>- Public institutions:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Within each public entity, ensuring that the departments of planning, finance and procurement have a multi-sectoral approach and coordinate, communicate and cooperate with each other</li> <li>b. Between public entities, ensuring that the names and AGPO serial numbers of enterprises that have won tenders are published (to avoid some businesses becoming dominant)</li> </ol> </li> <li>- Public processes, including streamlining registration to AGPO, simplifying tender documents and ensuring prompt and full payments</li> <li>- Public tools for procurement—make the Integrated Financial Management System (IMFIS) friendlier to users</li> <li>- Monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) on AGPO, including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. improving current practices in order to have data on the outcomes of the AGPO initiative (volume and spend going to intended disadvantaged groups)</li> <li>b. producing research on the impact of AGPO (e.g., on job creation, business expansion, savings or innovation through competition)</li> </ol> </li> <li>- Capacity-building, communication and awareness-raising:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. on the demand side, at national and local levels (including on the AGPO initiative, reporting about AGPO, IMFIS)</li> <li>b. on the supply side—WOBs—with, e.g., trainings</li> </ol> </li> <li>- Financing: helping WOBs access financing</li> </ul>
Nigeria (ctd. on next page)	UNW Nigeria 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research, including for use in advocacy:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Before all else, conducting a survey on the state of WOBs in the country to complement the present baseline report and to provide the information required for further engagement</li> <li>b. Research and advocacy around gender-responsive or affirmative procurement in the country to make the case for it, tailored to the national macroeconomic context and policy</li> </ol> </li> <li>- Legislation and policies, pushing for reforms and affirmative procurement/GRP using: policy briefs, advocacy and a gender audit of the training products of the Bureau for Public Procurement (BPP)</li> <li>- Anti-corruption action</li> </ul>

Country	Ref.	Programming areas and entry points for intervention identified
Nigeria	UNW Nigeria 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capacity-building:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. on the demand side, at national and local levels, through stakeholder workshops, South–South learning and visits and technical assistance to procuring agencies</li> <li>b. on the supply side—WOBs—with trainings on public procurement</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Support to WOBs upgraded through facilitation of access to information, trainings (see above) and dialogue with policymakers</li> </ul>
Pakistan	UNW Pakistan n.d.-a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legislation, policies and mandates:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. in the public sector (including government setting of standard definition for WOBs, introducing procurement quotas and tax exemptions for WOBs, removing limit on number of lots to allow splitting of lots)</li> <li>b. in the private sector (introducing GRP in companies’ mandate and policies, with quotas or other measures for greater inclusion, using advocacy and information on WOBs to make the case for GRP to large corporations)</li> <li>c. in the public or private sector (certifying WOBs)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Public, private and non-profit institutions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. chambers of commerce and industry and business associations playing a more active role to identify and support WOBs</li> <li>b. in the public and private sector, recruiting and supporting more women in procurement departments and training them on the job in GRP and in supporting suppliers through coordination and communication</li> <li>c. in the private sector:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- having more collaboration between corporations, formal financial sector, organizations in impact and development sector and public sector for policy support, to create an enabling environment and achieve greater impact</li> <li>- large corporations “[w]orking with their existing suppliers to foster more gender inclusive business practices” (p. 33)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>- Processes in public and private procurement, including simplifying tender documentation and bidding processes, adding language to encourage WOBs to bid, engaging with prospective women-owned suppliers and highlighting opportunities for corporate partnership and holding meet-the-buyer sessions (through collaborations between procuring entities, chambers of commerce and industry, business associations and one-stop platform)</li> </ul>
	UNW Pakistan n.d.-b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tools for public and private procurement, by creating:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. dedicated online information directory on WOB suppliers</li> <li>b. platform for WOBs to collaborate and build their networks among themselves and with suppliers</li> <li>c. more broadly, online one-stop platform bringing together WOBs, public and private procuring entities and financial institutions to offer multiple tools and services (e.g., certification of WOBs, online directory of WOBs, networking platform, support for WOBs on business registration and other legislation, capacity-building on supply and demand sides)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- M&amp;E on public and private procurement, including disaggregating existing supplier data by gender</li> <li>- Capacity-building, communication and awareness-raising:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. on the demand side:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- capacity-building in the public and private sectors at national and local levels (on GRP, including to incorporate gender-responsive stakeholder management and business ethics)</li> <li>- leveraging of large private companies’ “marketing and advertising capabilities to help redefine the national narrative around women entrepreneurship” (p. 33)</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. on the supply side—WOBs: by offering trainings and non-financial support on general business skills and on procurement, provided through well-qualified public, private or non-profit structures and through the online one-stop platform mentioned earlier</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Support to WOBs, assessing their needs in capacity-building</li> <li>- Financing: Helping WOBs access financing (credit guarantee schemes, collaboration with formal financial institutions—especially banks for SMEs—use of previously mentioned one-stop platform as a tool)</li> </ul>

Country	Ref.	Programming areas and entry points for intervention identified
Rwanda	UNW Rwanda 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research, including for use in advocacy: conducting a comprehensive countrywide study on women’s participation in public procurement, about the specific challenges faced by different categories of WOBs (rural vs. urban, levels of education, vulnerabilities such as disabilities, etc.), about the factors likely to boost their participation and about specific actions needed to support their participation</li> <li>- Legislation and policy: pushing for reforms within the existing framework and for changes to add provisions for GRP (e.g., preferential treatment for WOBs, quotas), using advocacy carried out through joint efforts by stakeholders from government, the private sector and civil society, as well as development partners such as UN Women</li> <li>- Public tools for procurement (advocate for a version of e-procurement in Kinyarwanda language)</li> <li>- M&amp;E on public procurement (put in place a gender-sensitive monitoring framework to ensure public procurement across sectors systematically mainstreams gender)</li> <li>- Capacity-building, communication and awareness-raising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. on the supply side—WOBs: with trainings both on general business skills and on public procurement</li> <li>b. towards the population at large: with community sensitization campaigns to address cultural norms and stereotypes that hinder women entrepreneurs at work and at home (involving men allies too)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Financing: engaging the financial sector to design women-friendly financial products that meet WOBs’ needs</li> </ul>
Senegal	KPMG Sénégal 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct research, including for use in advocacy, as soon as possible, including an exhaustive census of women entrepreneurs to have a reliable database with all relevant information (age, degree, marital status, sectors, difficulties etc.)</li> <li>- Legislation and policy (clarifications and improvements to existing provisions and institutional set-ups)</li> <li>- Anti-corruption action</li> <li>- Public institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. naming the Authority for the Regulation of Public Procurement [<i>Autorité de Régulation des Marchés Publics</i>, ARMP] as the public institution in charge of meeting the 15 per cent target set out in law</li> <li>b. creating a coordination body or mechanism between the ARMP and other stakeholders, especially women entrepreneurs’ groups, to check whether public tenders are actually allocated in line with the legal provision on affirmative procurement</li> <li>c. setting up a one-stop point of contact that can direct women entrepreneurs to the right information and support (including public programmes and services)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Public processes, including streamlining and simplifying tendering processes and documents and adapting technical and financial requirements to the size and complexity of each tender</li> <li>- M&amp;E on public procurement (make it compulsory for the lead agency to publish a national report on gender and access to public procurement each year)</li> <li>- Capacity-building, communication and awareness-raising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. on the supply side—WOBs—with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- widespread and accessible awareness-raising about the law on affirmative procurement towards women entrepreneurs and about the main laws and programmes on access to public procurement</li> <li>- identifying and adapting the trainings and support given to WOBs including general business skills, and offer these programmes through well-qualified structures and through media and ICTs</li> <li>- capacity-building to meet the requirements to bid for and perform under public procurement contracts</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. towards the population at large: with widespread and accessible awareness-raising about the law on affirmative procurement</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Support to WOBs and WOBs’ associations through organizing dialogues with these actors to have their views on the laws, regulations, policies and support services (including trainings) relating to women’s access to public procurement</li> <li>- Financing: encourage the financial sector to adopt policies for gender equality, to gather gender-disaggregated data, and to better meet WOBs’ needs (including by partnering with financial institutions to help women entrepreneurs get guarantees, loans and credit facilities)</li> </ul>

Country	Ref.	Programming areas and entry points for intervention identified
South Africa (cont. on next page)	Edinger et al. 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research, including for use in advocacy:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. strengthen research findings through targeted focus groups, especially on awareness gaps among WOBs, requested simplification and standardization of tender and bid documents, skills required to participate in public procurement and specific areas of assistance required (with strong attention to the differences between urban and non-urban areas and between key industries)</li> <li>b. develop case studies of WOBs that have been successful in government procurement</li> <li>c. further understand the demand-side status quo, including the challenges faced by public entities in targeting and engaging WOBs in their procurement processes</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Legislation, policies and mandates:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. in the public sector: making the framework coherent to facilitate access to government procurement, mainstreaming gender and empowering women in procurement (in policy, strategies, plans, supplier development plans, indicators, enforcement of compliance with affirmative procurement, accountability mechanisms), adopting the principles and risk assessment tools of the WEPs in order to empower women and requesting gender and diversity policies from suppliers and use this for business selection</li> <li>b. in private sector: amending the sector codes and scorecards to promote WOBs and mobilizing and facilitating a core group of industry champions to establish or better implement industry guidance or codes on procurement</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Public, private and non-profit institutions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. UN Women:</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Mackie et al. 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- based on available typology of WOBs in relation to public and private procurement, centre GRP programming on facilitating partnerships and integrating support; focus GRP work on WOBs that are start-ups and small enterprises in sectors that will be priorities for the country, prioritizing stages in value chains that are easier for WOBs to enter and work in and focusing collaborations on priority programmes in the public sector and on the top large private companies</li> <li>- act as a convener of women's associations, and industry associations, to foster collaboration and steer a more coordinated and targeted approach in support of WOBs' increased participation in procurement</li> <li>- encourage public and private buyers to have outreach programmes towards WOBs</li> <li>- establish a 'WOBs Global Board'</li> <li>b. women's associations, and industry associations, playing a more active role in more targeted work for WOBs, under UN Women's convening, by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- doing evidence-based lobbying towards the public sector (including joint lobbying for better enforcement of affirmative procurement, for awareness and education campaigns to educate WOBs on affirmative procurement and for use of e-tools in public procurement)</li> <li>- doing evidence-based lobbying towards the private sector (to channel corporate social investments towards educating and upskilling WOBs so they can better access public tenders and to engage large firms in these trade associations to prioritize WOBs when subcontracting for large public tenders)</li> <li>- carrying out or channelling awareness and education campaigns for WOBs about affirmative procurement and available support in the public sector, with the campaigns run by UN Women, public entities or women and industry associations themselves</li> <li>- facilitating networking, and promoting connections and matchmaking on procurement opportunities for WOBs (through connections with other WOBs, with potential clients in the public or private sector and with potential industry peers, clients and suppliers)</li> <li>- collaborating more with UN Women on enabling and empowering WOBs, by leveraging the respective entities' knowledge and resources</li> <li>- having women's associations seek partnerships with their sister organizations abroad, which UN Women can facilitate</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. public institutions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- analysing existing supply chains to establish a baseline of women suppliers and entrepreneurs</li> <li>- implementing strategic sourcing for GRP (gender transformation integrated in tenders and pre-qualification elements during demand management, in proposal evaluations during acquisition management, in award and contracting and in evaluation of suppliers' performance)</li> <li>- improving performance on GRP (benchmarking, auditing, building capacity and managing performance)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	UNW SAMCO 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- based on available typology of WOBs in relation to public and private procurement, centre GRP programming on facilitating partnerships and integrating support; focus GRP work on WOBs that are start-ups and small enterprises in sectors that will be priorities for the country, prioritizing stages in value chains that are easier for WOBs to enter and work in and focusing collaborations on priority programmes in the public sector and on the top large private companies</li> <li>- act as a convener of women's associations, and industry associations, to foster collaboration and steer a more coordinated and targeted approach in support of WOBs' increased participation in procurement</li> <li>- encourage public and private buyers to have outreach programmes towards WOBs</li> <li>- establish a 'WOBs Global Board'</li> <li>b. women's associations, and industry associations, playing a more active role in more targeted work for WOBs, under UN Women's convening, by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- doing evidence-based lobbying towards the public sector (including joint lobbying for better enforcement of affirmative procurement, for awareness and education campaigns to educate WOBs on affirmative procurement and for use of e-tools in public procurement)</li> <li>- doing evidence-based lobbying towards the private sector (to channel corporate social investments towards educating and upskilling WOBs so they can better access public tenders and to engage large firms in these trade associations to prioritize WOBs when subcontracting for large public tenders)</li> <li>- carrying out or channelling awareness and education campaigns for WOBs about affirmative procurement and available support in the public sector, with the campaigns run by UN Women, public entities or women and industry associations themselves</li> <li>- facilitating networking, and promoting connections and matchmaking on procurement opportunities for WOBs (through connections with other WOBs, with potential clients in the public or private sector and with potential industry peers, clients and suppliers)</li> <li>- collaborating more with UN Women on enabling and empowering WOBs, by leveraging the respective entities' knowledge and resources</li> <li>- having women's associations seek partnerships with their sister organizations abroad, which UN Women can facilitate</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. public institutions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- analysing existing supply chains to establish a baseline of women suppliers and entrepreneurs</li> <li>- implementing strategic sourcing for GRP (gender transformation integrated in tenders and pre-qualification elements during demand management, in proposal evaluations during acquisition management, in award and contracting and in evaluation of suppliers' performance)</li> <li>- improving performance on GRP (benchmarking, auditing, building capacity and managing performance)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Country	Ref.	Programming areas and entry points for intervention identified
South Africa	Edinger et al. 2017	<p>d. private sector: properly executing industry codes and preferential procurement rules</p> <p>e. Improving processes in public and private procurement, including redesigning the process of public procurement at all stages to make them more streamlined, user-friendly and easier to comply with, from tendering and bidding to award, feedback, performance and payment, and inviting WOBs' feedback on the process (improvement of process to be conducted through lean thinking and lean manufacturing processes and through greater use of electronic tendering)</p> <p>- Tools for public and private procurement, by:</p>
	Mackie et al. 2019	<p>a. shifting quickly towards electronic tendering technologies for public procurement, such as enterprise eTendering system or Electronic Reverse Auctions</p> <p>b. using women's associations' and industry associations' membership databases to assist interested member WOBs looking for partners on bids</p> <p>c. creating industry-specific databases of WOBs fully compliant and ready to do procurement with government (creation through collaboration between specific public entities and women's associations or industry associations)</p> <p>- industry organizations or lead firms establishing or ramping up integrated supplier development programmes for WOBs that are integrated (including financing, access to markets, business management, participation in procurement, training and upskilling, peer networking, office space)</p> <p>- UN Women developing and hosting a national eLearning platform on public procurement for WOBs</p>
	UNW SAMCO 2019	<p>- UN Women, public entities or women and industry associations running more awareness and education campaigns to educate WOBs on affirmative procurement and on available support tools and services for WOBs in the public and private sectors</p> <p>- women's associations and industry associations hosting or identifying workshops, seminars and other platforms to share knowledge and access to information with WOBs and helping WOBs with networking relevant to procurement</p> <p>- mentoring WOBs</p> <p>- WOBs engaging in self-learning and education around public procurement opportunities</p> <p>- Support to WOBs: assessing WOBs' needs in capacity-building</p> <p>- Financing: helping WOBs access relevant commercial financing (e.g., invoice financing, finance based on business assets, soft loans, preferential payment terms, access to finance)</p>

**APPENDIX 8.**

**Topics the CO's asked the 11 research documents to examine (terms of reference, study objectives or research questions, as mentioned by the study authors)**

Country	Ref.	Topics the CO's asked the studies to examine
Brazil	FGVcelog 2019a, 2019b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measure the participation of businesses owned or led by women in the supply chains of large companies in Brazil</li> <li>- Understand the barriers faced in engaging them and how managers can improve this participation</li> </ul>
Kenya	Kiriti Nganga 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investigate how much beneficiaries (women, youth, people with disabilities) participate in government procurement opportunities (volume and value of tenders awarded)</li> <li>- Identify barriers or challenges among women, youth and people with disabilities that prevent them from fully using AGPO opportunities, including their level of awareness of AGPO</li> <li>- Identify barriers or challenges among procuring entities in implementing AGPO, including bottlenecks in monitoring, reporting, tracking systems and evaluation, at Public Procurement Regulatory Authority and AGPO Secretariat</li> <li>- Provide recommendations to the relevant stakeholders (including policymakers, public entities, UN Women and the African Development Bank) on how to help the AGPO initiative meet its objectives</li> </ul>
Nigeria	UNW Nigeria 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the challenges women entrepreneurs face in accessing government supply chains</li> <li>- Describe and analyse the access of WOBs to government procurement</li> <li>- Investigate the common issues and challenges (e.g., access to information, financial and structural capacity), as well as concerns and misconceptions that women face in accessing public procurement</li> <li>- Provide recommendations, including key areas of opportunity for engagement, to assist in overcoming key barriers and challenges faced by WOBs and female entrepreneurs</li> </ul>
Pakistan	UNW Pakistan n.d.-a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review current public procurement policies and government procurement expenditure and identify whether they give special consideration to WOBs</li> <li>- Identify and review public procurement procedures, information on bids and requirements</li> <li>- Explore whether women are specifically considered in procurement policies in the private sector</li> <li>- Analyse the characteristics of public and private procurement from WOBs, and of the WOBs involved in it (including number of WOBs, nature of business, industries, major clients, annual turnover)</li> <li>- Analyse in depth the challenges faced by WOBs in public and private procurement</li> <li>- Identify WOBs' needs for capacity-building, including on applications for procurement bids</li> </ul>
	UNW Pakistan n.d.-b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify potential WOBs that could become P&amp;G suppliers and suppliers to other large companies</li> <li>- Assess the capacity of these WOBs as potential suppliers to a large corporation</li> <li>- Identify opportunities for P&amp;G and other companies to improve accessibility for WOBs to do business with them</li> </ul>

Country	Ref.	Topics the CO's asked the studies to examine
Rwanda	UNW Rwanda 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generate background information as a basis for facilitating a continuous dialogue on GRP between government, women entrepreneurs, development partners and other stakeholders</li> <li>- Provide decision-makers in government, women entrepreneurs and stakeholders that promote gender equality with a coherent proposal for furthering women entrepreneurs' engagement in procurement tenders</li> <li>- Identify concrete approaches and steps to improve WOBs' capacities to successfully compete in public tenders</li> </ul>
Senegal	KPMG Sénégal 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take stock of the implementation of art. 33 of the Law no. 2008-29 of 28/07/2008 on the Promotion and Development of SMEs, in relation to the promotion of female entrepreneurship in Senegal</li> <li>- Identify the weaknesses and biases that may affect its implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify the constraints in public procurement that pose obstacles to women's competitiveness in public tendering</li> <li>b. Check whether legal and regulatory provisions for access to public procurement match WOBs' lived experiences of this</li> <li>c. Assess potential inequalities in the attribution of public tenders, depending on sectors, competing bidders' profiles and the amounts at play in tenders</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Provide a baseline study that can be used as reference to monitor, through later studies, the effectiveness of changes in policies and rules for WOBs' access to public procurement</li> <li>- Provide recommendations to help WOBs better access public procurement, including on WOBs' competitiveness in public tenders</li> </ul>
South Africa	Edinger et al. 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide an update on legislative and regulatory public procurement framework developments and how these apply to WOBs</li> <li>- Re-investigate the supply side of public procurement to determine the key hindrances to WOBs in competing for government tenders</li> <li>- Offer key findings and recommendations to fill knowledge gaps and provide a path forward for stakeholders seeking to encourage greater participation and empowerment of WOBs through affirmative procurement</li> </ul>
	Mackie et al. 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a typology of WOBs with the capacity and potential to take up public or private sector procurement opportunities</li> <li>- Define the state of women entrepreneurs, including main barriers, with a focus on procurement opportunities</li> <li>- Provide a high-level context for public and private sector procurement parameters and environment in South Africa</li> <li>- Offer high level comment and recommendations of possible areas for intervention (including preliminary prioritization of possible points of entry)</li> </ul>
	UNW SAMCO 2019	<p>Assist public procurement officials to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gain deeper understanding of what is meant by gender equality, equity, women's empowerment, gender responsiveness and gender-transformative change in relation to procurement</li> <li>- Gain deeper understanding of the objective of gender-responsive preferential procurement practices in the public sector</li> <li>- Gain deeper understanding of the legal mandates for gender-responsive preferential procurement</li> <li>- Use norms, standards and guidelines to develop strategies, workplans and indicators for gender-responsive preferential procurement</li> <li>- Improve performance and achieve policy targets for preferential procurement of women and WOBs</li> </ul>

APPENDIX 9.

Specific information the CO's requested from the 11 studies in order to inform and implement their GRP programming

Country	Ref.	Specific information requested
Brazil	FGVcelog 2019a, 2019b	<p>Analytical mapping of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Companies' overall sustainability and diversity programmes and projects, and how these are deployed to the functional areas of the company</li> <li>- How these projects are incorporated into the purchasing area of the company</li> <li>- Companies' actual level of supplier diversity, mainly with a gender perspective, and whether they measure the participation of women-owned suppliers in their supply base</li> <li>- Companies' potential or actual outcomes and barriers to purchase from women suppliers</li> </ul>
Kenya	Kiriti Nganga 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of the formal procurement framework of AGPO</li> <li>- Analysis of current state of participation of women in AGPO</li> <li>- Analysis of supply-side barriers experienced by WOBs</li> <li>- Analysis of demand-side barriers experienced by public procuring entities</li> <li>- Assessment of public systems to monitor, report on and track AGPO</li> </ul>
Nigeria	UNW Nigeria 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of the formal framework of public procurement and its implications for existing and potential affirmative procurement or for GRP</li> <li>- Analysis of current state of participation of WOBs in national markets and supply value chains</li> <li>- Analysis of current state of participation of WOBs in public procurement</li> <li>- Analysis of supply-side barriers experienced by WOBs (including barriers to integration in the formal sector)</li> <li>- Analysis of demand-side practices in public procurement (social, political, cultural, and other nuances shaping the character of public procurement)</li> <li>- Analysis of how GRP fits into the national, regional and global macroeconomic context</li> </ul>
Pakistan	UNW Pakistan n.d.-a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of the formal frameworks of public and private procurement, and their implications for existing and potential affirmative procurement or for GRP</li> <li>- Analysis of demand-side procurement practices in public sector (especially public procurement processes during tendering, bid evaluation, award and payment) and private sector (supply chains)</li> <li>- Study of WOBs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Analysis of current state of WOBs based on non-random sample (profile, nature of business, major clients, industry, company size, location)</li> <li>b. Mapping and profile of existing WOBs that have the capacity to become suppliers in the corporate supply chain of multinational companies such as Procter &amp; Gamble (P&amp;G) Pakistan, i.e., larger and more experienced WOBs in five selected sectors (information about: personal and household situation; business size, sales and sector; business skills and opportunities; attitudes and goals; financing)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	UNW Pakistan n.d.-b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of current state of participation of WOBs in public and private procurement</li> <li>- Analysis of demand-side action for WOBs and for WOBs' access to procurement on the part of public and private institutions</li> <li>- Analysis of demand-side barriers to GRP experienced by public and private procuring entities</li> <li>- Analysis of supply-side barriers experienced by WOBs in public and private procurement</li> <li>- Assessment of public and private systems to monitor, report on and evaluate participation by WOBs in procurement</li> </ul>

Country	Ref.	Specific information requested
Rwanda	UNW Rwanda 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of the formal framework of public procurement and its implications for existing and potential GRP</li> <li>- Analysis of current state of WOBs (profile and comparison with men-owned businesses, including number of WOBs, sectors, business turn over)</li> <li>- Analysis of current state of participation of WOBs in public procurement</li> <li>- Analysis of supply-side barriers experienced by WOBs</li> </ul>
Senegal	KPMG Sénégal 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of the formal procurement framework on affirmative procurement for women-owned SMEs</li> <li>- Analysis of current state of participation of WOBs in public procurement, especially through affirmative public procurement for women-owned SMEs</li> <li>- Analysis of supply-side barriers experienced by WOBs</li> <li>- Analysis of demand-side action for WOBs' access to public procurement (including affirmative procurement) on the part of public, private or non-profit institutions, with a focus on those that promote women's entrepreneurship</li> <li>- Assessment of systems to monitor, report on and evaluate participation by women-owned SMEs, in public institutions and private financial institutions, as this relates to these WOBs' access respectively to public procurement and financial services</li> </ul>
South Africa	Edinger et al. 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of the formal framework of affirmative public procurement and of private procurement related to this</li> <li>- Analysis of demand-side procurement practices in public sector (especially public procurement processes during tendering, bid evaluation, award and payment) and private sector (supply chains), with analysis disaggregated by business size, sectors and industries and stage in value chains</li> <li>- Study of WOBs in report by Mackie et al.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Mapping and analytical typology of WOBs in South Africa, with focus on relation to public or private procurement—analysis by stage of business development (represented by business size), by sector and by stage in sectoral value chain</li> <li>b. Analysis of the capacities of existing WOBs in South Africa to access public and private procurement, especially for large buyers, with analysis disaggregated by sectors and industries and by stage in value chains</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Mackie et al. 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of current state of participation of WOBs in public and private procurement, with analysis disaggregated by business size, sectors and industries, and stage in value chains</li> <li>- Analysis of supply-side barriers experienced by WOBs in public and private procurement, with analysis disaggregated by sectors and industries and by stage in value chains</li> <li>- Analysis of demand-side action for WOBs and for WOBs' access to procurement on the part of public and private institutions</li> </ul>
	UNW SAMCO 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of demand-side barriers to affirmative procurement experienced by public and private procuring entities, with analysis disaggregated by business size, sectors and industries and stage in value chains</li> <li>- Assessment of public and private systems to monitor, report on and evaluate participation by WOBs in procurement</li> <li>- Implementation guidelines for gender-responsive preferential procurement in the public sector, to assist departments to mainstream gender in procurement, to empower women, to implement strategic sourcing principles and to improve performance to mainstream gender for gender equality and women empowerment in public procurement</li> </ul>





UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy; All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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