WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

CHALLENGES

Systemic inequality

Manifested as:
- Structural discrimination
- Adverse social norms
- Gendered division of care labour
- Crisis, conflict and climate change
- Shrinking fiscal space for public goods, Gender-blind policies and frameworks, Backsliding

Inequality of opportunity

Affects:
- Distribution of resources
- Income
- Labour force participation
- Business growth
- Asset ownership
- Representation
- Leadership

The global gender pay gap is stuck at 20%, with women paid up to 35% less than men in some countries

Inequality of outcomes

Resulting in:
- Vulnerability
- Exploitation
- Poverty
- Injustice
- Lack of voice

More than half of all women who work are in the informal economy, often in jobs where they lack even basic rights and protections

Women do at least 3 times more unpaid care work than men on average—the equivalent of 9 per cent of GDP
VISION

Growth
Human Rights
Wellbeing
Womens Economic Empowerment
Autonomy
Justice
Agency

Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown
COMPONENTS

Requires:
• Breaking silos
• Working at multiple scales with diverse stakeholders

Includes:
• Attention to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequalities
• Supporting girls to grow up to be women with economic agency, autonomy, and power.

POWER
Agency, power and autonomy

SYSTEMS
Policies, norms and institutions

RESOURCES
Equal rights and access to, ownership of and control over resources

Women’s Economic Empowerment
METHODOLOGY

ANALYSIS
An assessment of the global landscape and UN Women's role in realizing the economic rights of women and girls.

- Internal and external consultations
- Alignment with Strategic Plan
- Responds to recommendations in corporate evaluation
- Document review
- Data Analysis

VISION
A vision purpose and components of the Economic Empowerment strategy

- Impact
- Pathways to action
- Comparative advantage
- Human rights-based approach
- Leave no one behind principles
- Priority and cross-cutting areas
WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT GAP ANALYSIS

GAP 1
Getting women into the workforce is insufficient: informality, gender pay gap, low social protection

GAP 2
Macro economic policies are largely gender-blind: Only 26% of countries monitor budgets for gender

GAP 3
Care deficits are growing

GAP 4
Gender inequality persists in social protection

GAP 5
Single-issue and siloed approaches are falling short of transforming women’s status

GAP 6
Women’s grassroots organizations hold constrained influence over high level economic policy dialogues and global norms setting

GAP 7
Many women are being left behind (rural women, migrant women, indigenous women, women in conflict situations)

GAP 8
Discriminatory social norms persist, but what works to shift them is unclear

GAP 9
Data to track progress on SDGs related to WEE and inform gender-responsive policy making is incomplete

GAP 10
Short-term funding cycles often fall short of bringing about sustainable advancement in WEE
Champion and support more coherent and enhanced performance and accountability for gender equality, women’s empowerment in the UN System

Leverage strong history of supporting national governments to effect policy change

Shift discriminatory social norms through collaboration with grassroots organizations as well as policy and legal support

Harness in-house capacity for research and development and long standing relationships with feminist economists to advance research and data on WEE

Convene key economic actors to advance WEE and shape global and local discourses

Bridge silos by leveraging UN Women’s in-house expertise across multiple issue areas

Opportunities
DEFINITION OF WEE

Women’s economic empowerment (WEE) is a transformative, collective process through which economic systems become just, equitable, and prosperous, and all women enjoy their economic and social rights, exercise agency and power in ways that challenge inequalities and level the playing field, and gain equal rights and access to, ownership of, and control over resources, assets, income, time and their own lives.
3 PRIORITY AREAS, 3 CROSS-CUTTING AREAS

Women and the World of Work
Transform Care Systems
Gender-responsive Climate Action

Financing for Gender Equality
Gender-responsive Macro-Policies
Changing Gender and Social Norms
KEY PRIORITIES
GENDER EQUALITY ACCELERATORS

**Women and the World of Work**
Decent jobs for women, equal pay, entrepreneurship and business growth, legal and policy frameworks, equitable and inclusive business practices

**Transform Care Systems**
Integrated care systems focused on recognition, reduction, redistribution of care work, and renumeration and representation of care workers

**Gender-responsive Climate Action**
Gender-responsive climate action and climate finance, Gender-responsive Just transitions and decent jobs for women in the blue and green economies
EXAMPLES OF WORK

- Led by the ILO, UN Women and OECD, the Equal Pay International Coalition engages members to take concrete steps to accelerate the closing of the gender pay gap and the achievement of pay equity.

- EPIC acts at the global, regional and national levels to support governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and other stakeholders to take concrete steps to reduce the gender pay gap.

- For example, through its recommendations, policy advice, and peer-to-peer learning exchanges EPIC contributed to Ukraine’s National Strategy and its operational action plan for Bridging the Gender Pay Gap for the period up to 2030 that the government adopted on 15 September 2023.
CONTEXTUALIZING THE STRATEGY IN ARAB STATES

• Regional Programme to support Arab States to ensure “More women access equitable employment opportunities and services, increasing the rate of women’s participation in the workforce, including the most marginalised”.

• Through a multidisciplinary approach, the strategy aims to realise a 5% surge in women’s employment throughout the Arab States by 2030.

• Phase 1 countries include Egypt, Jordan and Morocco.
CROSS-CUTTING AREAS

**Financing for Gender Equality**
Increase the volume and quality of financing going to gender equality and the economic empowerment of women

**Gender-responsive Macro-Policies**
Develop gender-responsive macro-economic policies and analyze impacts of macro-economic policies on women's economic empowerment

**Changing Gender and Social Norms**
Change discriminatory social and gender norms that affect women's access to decent jobs, their economic autonomy and economic power
PATHWAYS TO ACTION

**Policy**
Shape the global, regional, national and local discourse and normative frameworks on women's economic empowerment

**Implementation**
Support governments to connect gender-responsive policy change to gender-responsive programming

**Partnerships**
Amplify the influence of women's rights and gender equality organizations and multi-stakeholder partnerships at all levels

**Data**
Catalyze the generation and use of gender data and statistics

**Convening**
Convene multi-stakeholder partnerships to deliver on economic and climate justice
WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

**SUMMARY**

**POWER**
- Agency, power and autonomy

**SYSTEMS**
- Policies, institutions and norms

**RESOURCES**
- Equal rights and access to, control over and ownership of resources

**SYSTEMIC OUTCOMES**
- Global normative frameworks and gender-responsive laws, policies and institutions
- Financing for Gender Equality
- Positive social norms, including engaging men and boys
- Equitable access to services, goods & resources
- Voice, agency and leadership
- Production, analysis and use of gender statistics
- UN System Coordination

**PATHWAYS TO CHANGE**
- Policy
- Implementation
- Partnerships
- Data
- Convening

**CROSS-CUTTING AREAS**
- Financing for Gender Equality
- Gender-responsive Macro-Policies
- Changing Gender and Social Norms
- Women and the World of Work
- Transforming Care Systems
- Gender-responsive Climate Action

**CHALLENGES**
- Systemic inequality ➤ Inequality of outcomes ➤ Inequality of opportunity
WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT