



FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME



INCOME GENERATION FOR WOMEN: DECENT WORK AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

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The issue

Women’s access to income through decent employment and social protection is the most transformative way to promote women’s economic empowerment and the achievement of substantive gender equality. It strengthens women’s agency and bargaining power, with broader benefits for families and communities.

Women’s economic empowerment and gender equality can be achieved by extending women’s opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace, access to social protection, and better prospects for personal and social development.

Efforts to secure women’s income generation must start by promoting an enabling macroeconomic framework, where decent employment creation and gender equality remain the main objectives of development and growth policies. Inclusive policies will generate decent jobs and allow for a more equal distribution of income and non-income gains.

The burden of unpaid care work on women and girls puts major constraints on their time and opportunities, perpetuating their economic marginalization and preventing their enjoyment of many rights, including to paid work, education, and skills development. Support for unpaid care work and social protections, combined with active labour market policies, can have important multiplier effects across a spectrum of development goals, including increased female labour force participation and aggregate demand.

Our strategy for change

The quest for decent-living wages and better living conditions is a universal aspiration for both men and women around the world, but it is particularly important for women given the discrimination they face in labour markets.

Gender-based discrimination and poverty often drive women’s labour force participation in particular sectors and occupations, very often in occupations characterized by low wages, lack of rights and poor working conditions.

Through this Flagship Programme, UN Women aims to promote income generation and improve women’s income security by expanding decent work opportunities and access

UN WOMEN’S FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME INITIATIVES

Income Generation and Security through Decent Work and Social Protection for Women is one of UN Women’s Flagship Programming Initiatives designed to ensure that UN Women can deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This Flagship Programme will support national governments to address multiple SDG targets across multiple goals.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS PROGRAMME, CONTACT:
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to gender-responsive social protections by undertaking specific actions in four key areas:

1. Creating political consensus for macroeconomic policies that support employment creation for women.

This action will require building capacity and raising awareness about the gender implications of macroeconomic policy, including trade, monetary and fiscal policies. It will also require strengthening civil society's capacity to engage with policy makers.

2. Promoting decent work for women through collective action, labour laws review and improved government and corporate policies.

This action will require supporting women's organizing in labour and product markets to improve the terms and conditions of employment and exchange. Gender audits of existing labour laws and policies will ensure that laws and corporate commitments redress existing gender inequalities in hiring, firing, training and promotion, equal pay and family-friendly work arrangements.

3. Recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work through investments in public infrastructure and services. This action will require targeted policy research and advocacy to quantify and value women's unpaid care work, including support for integrated time use and household surveys. It will also require capacity building of government institutions, women's and civil society organizations to inform the policy debate on social transfers and investments in social protection and public services to reduce and redistribute unpaid care work.

4. Increasing women's access to social protection, including social protection floors that guarantee basic income security during the life cycle. This action will require identifying and addressing the barriers limiting women's access to social protection and supporting women's organizations to participate in decision-making processes, evaluation and financing of social protection and investment in public services. The capacity of government institutions will also need to be strengthened to better manage integrated, gender-responsive social protection systems.

How the Programme works

The Programme will be implemented through a portfolio of country projects supported by a Global Policy Project.

Initially, the Programme will be launched in five countries (Sierra Leone, Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, and India). The Global Policy Project will support country projects by developing

FACTS AND FIGURES - WOMEN AND DECENT WORK

- Globally, there is a 27 percentage point gap between women's and men's labour force participation (UN Women 2015, Progress of the World's Women).
- On average, women are paid 24% less than men. At the regional level, the pay gap ranges from 33% in South Asia to 14% in the Middle East and North Africa (Ibid).
- A larger share of women's paid work is informal compared to men's. In some developing regions, 75% of women's employment is informal and unprotected (Ibid).
- 73% of the world's population still has no or only partial access to social protection—including child allowances unemployment benefits, paid maternity/parental leave and old-age pensions (ILO 2014).
- Women's time spent on unpaid care is higher than men everywhere in the world (UNRISD 2010).

methodologies to assess the gender gap and improve data collection, providing technical assistance, building global and regional partnerships, convening communities of practice, and ensuring knowledge management.

Partnerships for change

Creating the enabling environment for such processes and outcomes to occur will require the mobilization, coordination and capacity-building of a broad range of stakeholders.

Multistakeholder partnerships, coupled with UN Women's country presence, will be key in ensuring a successful implementation of the Flagship Programme. Key allies will include national and local and national partners, national and regional financial institutions, research and academic institutions, regional development banks, multilateral development banks, regional economic institutions, and specialized UN agencies such as ILO, UNRISD, UNCTAD, etc.

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