



Addressing the gender dimensions of decent work at country level

Views & Lessons from the Decent Work Pilot Programme

*A brief for the Gender Inter-Regional Consultation Meeting
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Basic premises...

Gender equality, or freedom from gender-based discrimination, is a fundamental part of decent work. It forms part of the universal social floor - fundamental human rights that apply everywhere regardless of a country's economic and social development.

At the same time, gender often influences individual access to, and participation and treatment in, employment, social protection and social dialogue. In other words, certain decent work deficits may be traced to inequalities and discrimination on gender grounds.

Moreover, while men and women of the same region, occupation, industry, income or community, might share the same work issues, they could very well experience these issues differently and suffer from other male- or women-specific decent work deficits.

Therefore, promoting decent work and developing responses to national development issues based on decent work, necessarily require a gender perspective.

And challenges ...

- ❑ How can the DWPP build greater understanding among national constituents and within the ILO, of how gender-based social processes determine the “decent work situation” (its multiple facets and the interaction between these facets, the economic and social processes of work itself)?
- ❑ How can the DWPP enable ILO constituents and partners to address the gender dimensions of decent work, or promote decent work in a way that enhances gender equality?
- ❑ Do women and men perceive decent work differently? Do they differ in decent work aspirations? What are the mediating factors? How do we strengthen our sensitivity to these?
- ❑ In what way can responses be formulated so that the gender dimensions of the issue at stake are addressed explicitly without “overloading” the agenda?
- ❑ Once implemented, DWPP actions would need to be assessed: have they reinforced gender inequalities or reduced gender gaps? what gender biases are embedded? who benefits and who don't?

Six ways for incorporating gender issues in the DWPP process ...

Six principles for integrating gender issues into the DWPP have been identified:

- ❑ Gender disaggregated data for analysis
- ❑ Policy dialogue specifically addressing gender dimensions
- ❑ Advocacy on gender dimensions
- ❑ Explicit gender-based targets for policies and programmes (i.e outcomes)
- ❑ Equal, or an increasingly better, participation of women in analysis and decision-making
- ❑ Equal, or an increasingly better, participation of women in capacity-building

The table below shows how these principles have been applied to different stages of the DWPP cycle, and gives some examples from pilot programme countries.

Stage of programme cycle	Ways of “en-gendering” the programme	Some examples from DWPP countries
1. DWPP formulation – thematic focus, exploratory stage		
Consultations with social partners Identification of priorities	Also consult gender and women’s bureaus, women’s organizations, gender experts	Bangladesh
Gender analysis	Collection/compilation of gender disaggregated data, e.g. in DW profiles	Bangladesh, Ghana, Philippines
	Use of gender experts	Panama
Concept Note (content)	Gender dimensions of issues are clearly identified	Ghana, Morocco, Bangladesh
National policy dialogues	Agenda, TORs of speakers include gender dimensions, points for discussion include gender issues	Ghana GAWE Bangladesh Morocco Philippines
	Include gender & women’s bureaus and orgs. (lacks documentation so far)	
2. Planning and implementing components/interventions of DWPP		

Analytical studies/ papers for national policy dialogues, as basis for designing actions (content)	Terms of reference include the treatment and analysis of gender dimensions of issues, collection and presentation of gender-disaggregated data	all DWPPs
National policy dialogues, workshops (process)	Agenda, TORs of speakers include gender dimensions, points for discussion include gender issues Include gender and women's bureaus & orgs (lacks documentation so far)	Ghana GAWE in design and policy dialogue
Design of specific components and actions (content)	Technical advisory missions TOR of ILO team includes gender questions (also guided by concept note) Technical support / expertise - experts may include a gender specialist or expert, who is responsible for mainstreaming gender across all components, for elaborating gender aspects	Phil DWAP document & IR2; Morocco; Bahrain
Actual gender content (substance/content)	Women-specific component	Morocco
	Gender is operationally mainstreamed in the activities, in targets and indicators, monitoring	Ghana (TCRAM project); Argentina planned in Morocco;
	Tools (manuals, kits) include specific content dealing with gender	Philippine Local Development and DW Kit Morocco competitiveness & productivity package Ghana small business associations manual; training manual informal economy for local officials
	Capacity building of social partners in gender	planned in Morocco
Monitoring and impact assessment (process)	Gender-sensitive indicators Monitoring tools	Ghana TC-RAM project and impact assessment survey

3. Structures and representation		
Steering Committee or Advisory Body	Gender balance in composition	Beyond control of the ILO – thus far very often asymmetrical; Ghana: gender dimension as agenda item
Participation in national meetings, workshops (process)	Document participation of women and men	Reports being submitted by relevant field offices

Some lessons from the DWPP to date ...

On process:

1. A gender perspective in the thematic issues of a country DWPP needs to be owned in the same way that the whole content of DWPP is a demand-driven process. One must bear in mind that social partners have multiple and competing priorities. National ownership of the gender issues in the DWPP needs to be built deliberately.
2. The use of the term “gender mainstreaming” is not helpful. Promotion of equality between men and women, or reduction of discrimination, makes better sense and can easily be understood or appreciated by national constituents.
3. Resources for “engendering” help.
 - Fund requirements for including explicit measures to examine gender dimensions of a technical field, and tackle the gender issues (Morocco)
 - Competitive process to get resource allocation for gender was an additional “incentive” to cover gender issues much more explicitly and elaborately (Ghana). (However, integrating gender might be achieved in many more ILO activities if it were a sine qua non criterion rather than a “bonus” criterion.)
4. Criteria for integrating gender equality issues, and for assessing whether this has been achieved, should be stated more explicitly and in sufficient detail for programme designers.

On substance:

1. Gender dimensions cannot be addressed in isolation; they should “naturally” fall within the agenda; linked to the technical issues. Example: gender equality and competitiveness.
2. Gender-based analysis of policy or of a technical area goes beyond providing or generating sex-disaggregated data; it should explain differences between men and women as well as identify and analyse gender- or women-specific problems.
3. Necessary expertise that combines knowledge in a technical area of the programme, in gender questions and in the national situation is not always available.

- Use local knowledge base and national gender experts (Morocco, Philippines)
- Need for further development of operational (i.e. not limited to conceptual, theoretical) knowledge base on the gender aspects of specific policy issues or technical fields.