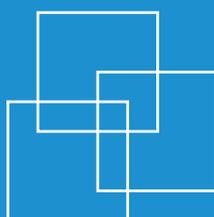
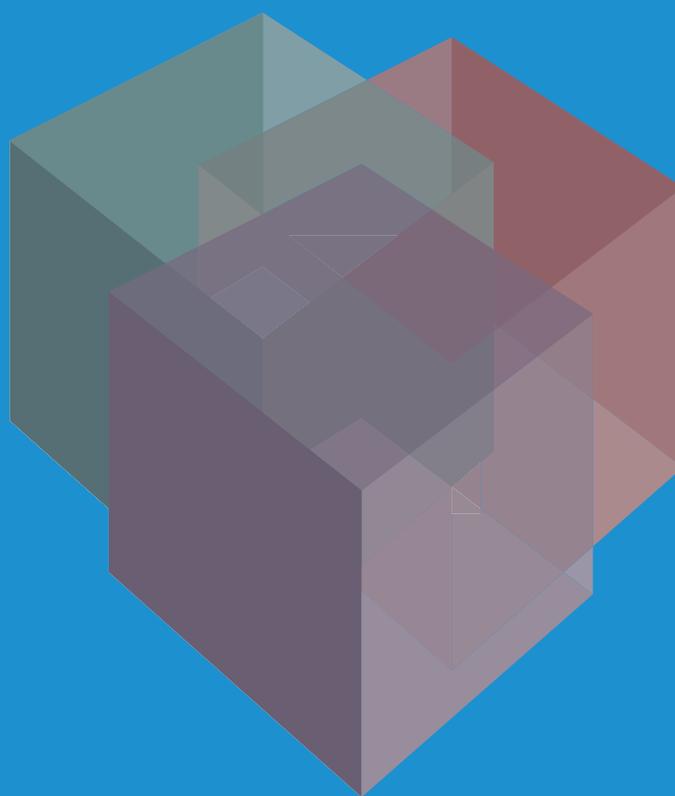




International
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GOOD PRACTICES IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN ILO TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS





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INTRODUCTION

This publication is an ILO Gender Equality Tool that aims to support the implementation of the ILO's Policy on Gender Equality¹ by sharing good practice elements of gender mainstreaming strategies applied in selected technical cooperation projects.

The publication is first and foremost intended for ILO staff, tripartite constituents – governments, employers' and workers' organizations – and other stakeholders associated with the implementation of ILO technical cooperation projects and programmes. Additionally, some of the elements identified in the case studies should be of interest to other development practitioners dedicated to integrating gender equality concerns into their work.

Although the case studies contained in this publication are context-specific, they present elements that can easily be adapted and tailored to other circumstances. An attempt is therefore made throughout the publication to highlight replicable elements.

The case studies demonstrate how the projects have integrated elements in the design and implementation phases to advance gender equality. Although these elements may not exhaust the different ways in which gender equality can be promoted in the project cycle, they clearly exemplify the "building blocks" of strategies that have proven successful in terms of making project achievements more responsive to gender equality.

¹ In 1999, the Director-General announced the ILO's Policy on Gender Equality. It states that mutually-reinforcing action to promote gender equality should take place in the Organization's staffing, substance and structure. The Policy, which is being operationalised through the ILO Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming for Gender Equality, places responsibility for its implementation on all ILO staff at all levels.

How the case studies were compiled

The Bureau for Gender Equality compiled the case studies, in collaboration with colleagues working in the ILO field structure, from a selection of projects implemented since 2002. They comprise a cross-section of ILO's activities relating to its four strategic objectives in all regions of the world. The 11 projects range from efforts to advance equal employment opportunities in Yemen, to promoting social and economic rights of indigenous peoples in Central American countries, to fighting debt bondage in South Asia.

Organization of the publication

This publication presents the overall ILO strategy for promoting gender equality through technical cooperation and outlines key criteria for identifying a good practice gender mainstreaming strategy. It also summarises some of the most relevant elements present in such a strategy.

The main thrust, however, is on elements from the gender mainstreaming strategies of 11 technical cooperation projects implemented by the ILO in partnership with its constituents and other relevant stakeholders. The case studies summarize the projects and their results in terms of their contribution to gender equality promotion, describe the gender mainstreaming strategies adopted, and identify good practice elements for replication.

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN ILO TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

The ILO views gender equality as integral to its vision of Decent Work for all women and men and as a fundamental principle in the effort to achieve its four strategic objectives:

- Promoting and realising standards and fundamental principles and rights at work;
- Creating greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income;
- Enhancing the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all;
- Strengthening tripartism and social dialogue.

Over the decades, the ILO, together with its constituents, has made considerable progress in promoting gender mainstreaming in technical cooperation as a strategy for advancing gender equality in the world of work. In order to further consolidate this strategy, the ILO Governing Body decided² that the Organization should take further steps to ensure that all technical cooperation programmes and projects, as well as ILO agreements with donors, should systematically mainstream gender.

Gender mainstreaming as a strategy

Gender mainstreaming is not an objective in itself but is an applied strategy through which the goal of gender equality can be attained. In practice, gender mainstreaming consists of a multiplicity of actions seeking to redress gender-based inequalities in all policies, programmes, projects, and institutional mechanisms and structures.

Gender mainstreaming in the project cycle

As an applied strategy, gender mainstreaming in technical cooperation projects entails:

- **Involving both women and men beneficiaries in consultations and analysis;**
- **Including sex-disaggregated data in the background analysis and justification;**
- **Formulating gender-sensitive strategies and objectives, and corresponding gender-specific indicators, outputs and activities;**
- **Striving for gender balance in the recruitment of project personnel and experts and in representation in institutional structures set up under the projects;**
- **Including impact assessment on gender equality in evaluations as well as gender expertise in the evaluation team.**

² At its 292nd session in March 2005.

Gender mainstreaming in practice

Within the technical cooperation programme, the ILO is piloting ways to make projects reflect the two-pronged approach to promoting gender mainstreaming adopted by the Organization:

Firstly, all projects should aim to systematically address the concerns of both women and men through gender analysis and planning. Secondly, targeted interventions should be designed to enable women and men to participate equally in, and benefit equally from, development efforts. The present publication gives examples of projects that in different ways have adopted this approach, either through particular interventions targeting women and/or men, or through activities advancing gender equality per se.

More concretely, and as exemplified by some of the good practices set out below, amongst the steps adopted by the ILO has been the establishment of gender equality allocations within individual project budgets. This measure has facilitated promotional and advocacy work on gender equality as well as technical support to ILO constituents on ways to advance gender equality through applied research and the promotion of measures to adopt ratification of the ILO's key equality Conventions, including: the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); the Discrimination Convention, 1958 (No. 111); the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156); and the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183).

Tripartism: a cross-cutting good practice

Tripartism and social dialogue are at the very core of ILO's work. Not surprisingly a significant element cutting across all of the projects is the contribution that they have made as an entry point in advancing gender equality although this has not necessarily been highlighted in each of the case studies.

However, the case studies do show how gender equality promotion has both reinforced and been reinforced by social dialogue mechanisms. It is important that this finding be appreciated by others involved in designing and implementing projects that advance gender equality in the world of work. Not only does tripartite involvement secure ownership of a project's activities and achievements among the key stakeholders, but it also ensures a much broader commitment to sustaining the results beyond the initial project phases.

IDENTIFYING A GOOD GENDER MAINSTREAMING PRACTICE

Good practices of gender mainstreaming strategies in technical cooperation interventions are useful tools in that they provide development practitioners with constructive lessons. However, as with most project strategies, they have to be understood and interpreted against their rightful contexts. This can often make their identification and replication quite challenging, as the more generic elements of the practice need to be extracted and considered from a completely different perspective and environment. The list below has been compiled to facilitate this process and provide guidance on some overall criteria when identifying a good practice gender mainstreaming strategy in technical cooperation projects.

Strategic: defining gender-sensitive objectives and unified actions

A gender mainstreaming strategy should be planned from the project's outset as a way of enhancing the overall project objective. The reason for this is that, if a gender mainstreaming approach is guided by erratic efforts to include the gender dimension during project implementation rather than by a pre-designed plan and connected actions, it becomes less of a strategy and more of a trial-and-error approach which cannot easily be monitored and assessed for impact. This is not to say that a gender equality strategy and its activities should not be open to revision and fine-tuning throughout project implementation. On the contrary, flexibility and adaptability are essential qualities for any strategy to be successful and for activities to lead to expected outcomes.

Practical: setting realistic goals within a reasonable timeframe

The overall objective of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality in a given context. For the sake of project implementation (and project implementers), however, the road to equality has to be translated into concrete outputs and activities. Most projects cannot be expected to achieve gender equality within the confines of a one- or two-year implementation cycle. A project's approach to gender equality needs to take this into account and identify practical and realistic outputs that contribute to advancing gender equality through the means and mechanisms available within the context of the project.

Specific: defining and documenting specific elements of the strategy

A gender mainstreaming strategy is not only easier to implement if it clearly describes and records the elements of the strategy and its specific activities but it is also more applicable to the project in question. A strategy that mechanically states that, "gender will be mainstreamed in all aspects of the project" cannot be said to constitute a good practice.

Systematic: incorporating gender equality in all stages of the project cycle

A gender mainstreaming approach promoting gender equality should be integrated into all stages of the project cycle – from design and implementation through to monitoring and evaluation. It should not appear as a separate sub-component. The impact of the gender component may easily be lost if gender equality is considered at the design stage but not during implementation, or if it is left out of the evaluation. Similarly, if gender is sporadically introduced during implementation but not considered in the project design, the approach can hardly be called strategic and will probably contain limited lessons for others. Furthermore, failure to properly integrate the gender dimension into the project may also lead to a failure to optimise project outcomes.

Measurable: monitoring project impact on gender equality

In order to ensure that gender is not “mainstreamed away”, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are needed, including indicators, that can assess the project’s progress and achievements on promoting gender equality. Projects without such mechanisms have little chance of gauging the success of their gender equality strategies. Moreover, projects that have earmarked resources for gender mainstreaming should aim to measure their impact.

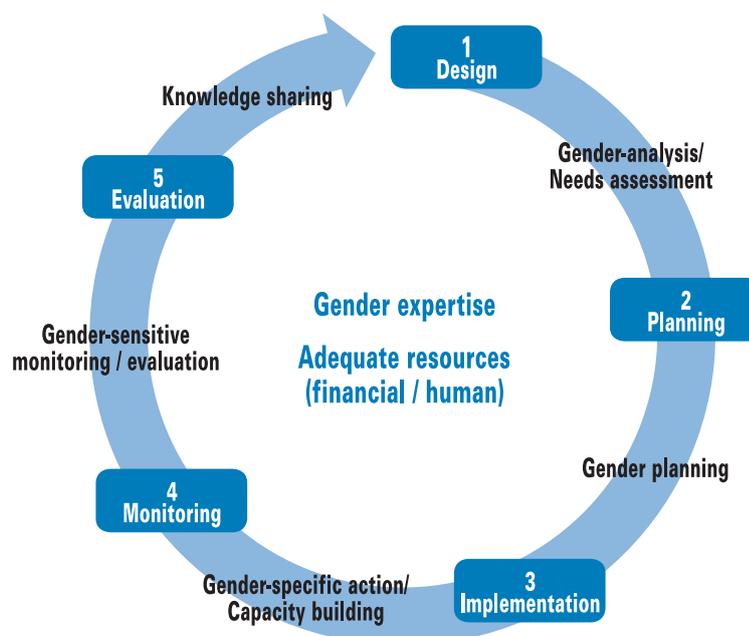
BUILDING BLOCKS OF A GOOD MAINSTREAMING PRACTICE

The 11 case studies examined for this publication revealed several good practice elements during project implementation that were found to promote gender equality in their various contexts. These elements are summarised as:

- **Gender analysis**
- **Gender needs assessment**
- **Gender planning**
- **Gender-specific action**
- **Capacity building on gender equality**
- **Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation**
- **Knowledge sharing on gender mainstreaming**
- **Relevant gender expertise**
- **Adequate resources**

The above elements address gender concerns at the various stages of the project cycle (see Figure 1). Although not exhaustive, they do represent the building blocks of gender mainstreaming strategies that have proven successful in making project achievements more responsive to gender equality. It is also worth noting that although these steps do not automatically guarantee gender equality in project outcomes, they do promote greater gender sensitivity in the various project phases.

Figure 1: Integrating gender equality in the project cycle



The summaries of the good practice elements outlined below include references to the individual case studies to illustrate how these elements are being integrated into the projects:

Gender analysis

Although gender analysis can be undertaken at any stage during the project cycle, it is proving most effective to include such analysis at the initial planning and design stages. In this way, the analysis can inform the subsequent steps of the project, including implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Above all, gender analysis is a tool for identifying the different roles and needs of women and men in a given context and project setting. In the context of the ILO, gender analysis is concerned with the following key variables:

- The division of labour between women and men;
- The different needs of women and men in the world of work;
- The sex-based division of access to, and control over, resources and benefits;
- Opportunities and constraints in the social and economic environment;
- The capacity of ILO constituents and other partner organizations to promote equality between women and men in employment.

Gender analysis contributes greatly to identifying and understanding a project's stakeholders (stakeholder analysis). It assesses their interests and the ways in which they affect project viability thus helping to identify appropriate forms of stakeholder participation.

Case studies 2 and 5 are good examples of projects that have included comprehensive gender analyses as part of the implementation strategy in their efforts to fight debt bondage and child labour in Asia. These analyses helped increase understanding among implementing partners of how differences between women and men, and girls and boys, can influence situations of debt bondage and labour exploitation. Eventually, this led to efforts to highlight gender roles and differences in the projects' sensitisation and capacity building strategies.

Gender needs assessment

Gender needs assessment is closely linked to the concept of gender analysis. A gender needs assessment is carried out to analyse so-called practical and strategic gender needs. Practical gender needs are needs that, once met, would enable women and men to maintain their existing positions in society. However, strategic gender needs, once met, would transform these positions and subsequently alter power relations between women and men.

Gender analysis and needs assessment are valuable analytical tools for strengthening a project's potential to meet the different interests of women and men throughout the project cycle with the aim of promoting fundamental rights at work and equal access to decent employment.

Case studies 3 and 7 show how two projects conducted needs assessments to identify gender-related gaps in household decision-making and processes of social dialogue.

By mapping men's and women's participation in household activities, the ETEDPI project (case study 3) allowed implementing partners in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua to develop effective capacity building tools to enhance understanding of productive work patterns and of the need for more equitable distribution of family responsibilities.

In Rwanda (case study 7), project activities put special emphasis on the promotion of gender equality and gender balance in trade unions and in social dialogue structures.

Gender planning

The findings of the gender analysis and needs assessment should be used to inform strategic planning of any project intervention. In essence, gender planning consists of developing a strategy which describes how gender equality will be promoted in project activities through specific measures and organizational arrangements – such as commitments to balanced representation of women and men in project activities and ensuring that adequate resources and expertise are available.

Case studies 1 and 10 are examples of how initial gender analysis informed the project design and planning phases.

The SYNDICOOP project (case study 1) used sex-disaggregated data as the basis for introducing a practical gender mainstreaming action plan for the project as well as for the national work plans in the four project countries.

In the employment promotion project in Central Asia and the Caucasus (case study 10), the background analysis built on results and lessons from previous gender-related interventions in the region. This enabled the project team to integrate gender concerns more effectively at the launch of the project by complementing gender-sensitive skills development and entrepreneurial education with awareness raising on gender equality among project staff and social partners.

Gender-specific action

Gender-specific action can be defined as action that is adopted to redress gender-based inequalities and discrimination against women and/or men in a given context. For example, the ILO recognises that, if historically entrenched discrimination against women in the world of work is to be tackled, specific action in favour of women may be required. Hence, the Organization promotes, when necessary, the use of gender-specific policy action to achieve such aims.

During a project's gender planning stage, it can be proposed that the project include such action to redress gender inequalities. This action can be directed either at women and/or men to ensure that the project affords and promotes equal opportunities and treatment through its activities.

Case studies 2 and 10 show how projects effectively included gender-specific activities.

In South Asia, the PEBLISA project (case study 2) implemented an innovative capacity building strategy aimed at reaching out to both female and male household members through the delivery of training and motivation sessions on gender issues. The sessions promoted possible ways to achieve more equitable decision-making within household structures.

In Central Asia and the Caucasus (case study 10), the project implemented a training programme for journalists to address stereotypical gender attitudes throughout the region.

Capacity building on gender equality

Capacity building and awareness-raising on gender equality and gender mainstreaming for both project staff and beneficiaries are essential in ensuring that gender analyses and planning are applied throughout the project cycle and used to inform project activities. Capacity building should focus on clarifying key gender concepts, understanding the role of gender analysis and providing practical guidance on how to undertake gender planning for project and programme activities.

Case studies 6, 7 and 9 are practical examples of how strategic capacity building can play a key role in fostering ownership amongst social partners on issues related to gender equality.

In Yemen (case study 6), capacity building contributed to strengthened mechanisms for social dialogue and collaboration on gender issues amongst relevant Directorates within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

In Rwanda and Latin America (case studies 7 and 9), capacity building activities led to the development of sustainable mechanisms for dialogue between social partners and provided support to strategic planning activities on gender equality and employment creation.

Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are important tools in assessing whether projects are meeting planned targets and objectives. They are also valuable processes for reviewing the extent to which projects are addressing key gender issues, including progress towards achieving equal access to education, training and decent employment. In order for monitoring and evaluation to be gender-sensitive, however, it is crucial that the relevant gender-sensitive indicators be integrated into the project design and that they in turn are integrated into the monitoring and evaluation guidelines and terms of reference. The above-mentioned gender analysis and planning processes are key stages in developing such indicators.

Case studies 1 and 4 show how projects incorporated participatory gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation strategies.

In the SYNDICOOP project (case study 1), implementing partners adopted a user-friendly monitoring tool to assess progress on gender equality.

Under the Health Micro-insurance Schemes for Women and their Families project (case study 4), management checklists with various gender-specific indicators were made available to mutual insurance schemes and relevant support institutions. These tools enabled implementing partners to systematically monitor impact on gender equality.

Knowledge sharing on gender mainstreaming

Knowledge sharing plays a key role in developing gender mainstreaming strategies. In essence, knowledge sharing is a process that captures and organises knowledge and experience and makes it accessible to a wider audience – thus cultivating new linkages between interested groups.

As demonstrated by the case studies, “good practices” and “lessons learnt” are valuable sources of knowledge as they enable project staff to learn from the experiences of other projects and apply them to their own work, particularly in gender mainstreaming in the different employment-related areas that the ILO tackles through technical cooperation. Knowledge sharing of the different approaches used to promote gender equality in the ILO’s technical cooperation activities allows the entire Organization to capitalise on the experiences.

Case studies 4 and 11 demonstrate how integrating knowledge sharing mechanisms to facilitate the systematic exchange of experiences on gender equality can allow implementing partners to capitalise on these experiences and adapt them to their own work.

In the African region, the Health Micro-insurance Schemes for Women and their Families project (case study 4) facilitated the establishment and management of a regional knowledge sharing network.

Similarly, the Decent Employment for Women in India project (case study 11) facilitated the establishment of a Gender Resource Centre, which serves as an effective mechanism for sharing experiences and good practices in promoting gender equality.

Relevant gender expertise

Cutting across all of the above is the need to attract relevant gender expertise to systematically implement the various elements of a strategy promoting gender equality. Unless sufficient expertise is available, it will be difficult to implement the above elements in a structured manner. Establishing linkages with gender expertise facilitates promotional and advocacy work on gender equality in project activities as well as technical support and advice to ILO staff and constituents on ways to mainstream gender into the project cycle and promote gender equality in the world of work. Such an approach can be very useful, especially when technical activities are centred on the promotion of the ILO's key equality Conventions, including the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); the Discrimination Convention, 1958 (No. 111); the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156); and the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183).

Case studies 5 and 8 are good examples of how project partners drew on relevant local expertise on gender issues to implement their mainstreaming strategies and achieve more gender equitable outcomes.

In Indonesia (case study 5), there was close cooperation with the Ministry of Women's Empowerment in the drafting of legislation to protect child domestic workers.

In the Philippines (case study 8), implementing partners worked closely with the national umbrella organization for home-based workers, PATAMABA, which has a strong role in advocacy work on gender equality, to reinforce the project's own advocacy efforts.

Adequate resources

Like gender expertise, sufficient resources are essential when implementing the various building blocks of a mainstreaming strategy promoting gender equality. This is not to say that gender mainstreaming will necessarily require vast amounts of resources, but rather that it will need recognition that the above elements require strategic commitment, in terms of human resources and budgets, in order to be implemented successfully. More concretely, amongst the steps adopted by the ILO has been the establishment of gender equality allocations within individual project budgets. This is exemplified in a number of the following case studies.

CASE STUDIES

The case studies presented in the following pages summarise how ILO works with its constituents – government ministries, and employers’ and workers’ organizations – as well as other relevant partners to promote gender equality as an integral part of the Decent Work Agenda.

The case studies comprise 11 technical cooperation projects implemented by the ILO in recent years across all regions of the world.

Although they address different aspects of Decent Work, they have all endeavoured to design and implement gender mainstreaming strategies in support of greater gender equality in the projects’ outcomes. Elements of these strategies have been identified as good practices from which others can learn and which can be adapted to different settings.

The case studies presented in the following pages include:

- Case study 1:** Improving the working and living conditions of informal economy workers through promoting equal access to decent work (Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda).
- Case study 2:** Promoting freedom from debt bondage (India, Nepal, Pakistan).
- Case study 3:** Promoting the rights of indigenous peoples through equal access to education and decent work (Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua).
- Case study 4:** Improving equal access to social protection and quality health care through rights promotion (Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Senegal).
- Case study 5:** Protecting girls and boys from exploitative domestic work through gender-sensitive legal and policy reform (Cambodia, Indonesia).
- Case study 6:** Advancing equal employment opportunities through women’s empowerment (Yemen).
- Case study 7:** Promoting equal employment opportunities through social dialogue and policy development (Rwanda).
- Case study 8:** Extending health care to workers in the informal economy through equal access to social protection schemes (Philippines).
- Case study 9:** Reducing the decent work deficit amongst women and men workers in the informal economy through social dialogue on gender equality and employment (Ecuador).
- Case study 10:** Gender-equitable access to decent work through skills development and vocational training (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia).
- Case study 11:** Promoting decent work for women and men workers through enhanced access to training (India).

The case studies open with a general description of the projects and how they promoted gender equality in the world of work and then identify key good practice elements in their gender mainstreaming strategies.

Improving the working and living conditions of informal economy workers through promoting equal access to decent work (Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda)

Good practice elements:

- Gender analysis
- Gender planning
- Adequate resources
- Relevant gender expertise
- Gender-specific actions
- Gender-sensitive monitoring
- Knowledge sharing

Poverty reduction among unprotected informal economy workers through trade union and cooperative joint action - SYNDICOOP (2nd phase)

Implemented amongst **trade unions** and **cooperatives** in Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

The decent work deficit is often significant in the informal economy, particularly in terms of income and basic conditions of employment, health and safety, access to social insurance, and observance of international labour standards. For women the situation is worse than for men as they are usually over-represented in the least-paid and least-protected jobs.

The SYNDICOOP project³ aimed to contribute to poverty reduction among unprotected informal economy workers in the four African countries by improving their working and living conditions and by promoting decent work and income. More specifically, the project's approach sought firstly to build the capacity of trade union and cooperative organizations to work together in organising workers in the informal economy and, secondly, to work with governments in improving the policy environment for the informal economy.

³ Implemented under the ILO/Netherlands Partnership Programme 2004-06.

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

One of the project's major accomplishments was that it strengthened the capacity of partner trade unions and cooperatives in all four countries to organise workers in the informal economy through a participatory and gender-sensitive approach.

In Kenya, for example, efforts were made to include both women and men in all stages of the planning, implementation and monitoring of project activities. In Rwanda, women made up 30 per cent of all seminar and workshop participants. They also comprised 50 per cent or more of participants in four out of the 10 local project groups. In Tanzania, gender committees – consisting of three women and three men – ensured equal representation during project implementation. Similarly, Ugandan women accounted for 50 per cent or more of all participants in four out of the eight National Rural/Urban Saving and Credit Society branches established under the project.

In all four countries, the project helped to set up permanent structures on gender equality within the trade union and cooperative apex organizations.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Gender analysis: capturing the project's gender dimension

In the first phase of the project (2002-03), SYNDICOOP included an analysis of the situation of women and men working in the informal economy in the four project countries. This stakeholder analysis was built into the project and formed the basis for specific action in the project's second phase that prioritised the needs of informal economy women and promoted a gender mainstreaming approach to advance gender equality.

Gender planning: pre-defining objectives, connected and specific actions

The second phase of the SYNDICOOP project was launched with agreement among project partners of the need to integrate the gender dimension into the project cycle. As a starting point, the project developed a practical "Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming" for the overall project, which in turn was reflected in the individual work plans for the four countries. The action plan called for the systematic involvement of women and men in the planning and implementation of all project activities and the development of relevant indicators to measure progress in achieving their participation. Moreover, the plan promoted awareness-raising on gender equality amongst the project's partners and beneficiaries.

**Adequate resources and relevant expertise:
supporting the integration of gender into overall project activities**

The project allocated a total of USD 100,000 in the overall budget to support the implementation of activities under the gender mainstreaming action plan. A gender coordinator was recruited to the project coordination team (technical coordination committee) and the national project teams (steering committees) in each country appointed a Gender Focal Point to advance gender-responsiveness in the individual country activities.

**Monitoring:
systematic monitoring of project impact on gender equality**

To monitor its achievements on promoting gender equality, the project adopted a user-friendly monitoring tool that provided easy access to planned outcomes and corresponding gender equality indicators. The tool was prepared with support from relevant gender expertise in the ILO.

Knowledge sharing: systematic exchange of experiences

SYNDICOOP developed a knowledge sharing strategy to facilitate the systematic exchange of experiences on gender equality and other technical areas of the project. As a part of this strategy, the project hosted a regional Knowledge Sharing Workshop, which dedicated two days to knowledge sharing on gender equality and to the further development of the project's gender mainstreaming action plan. Following the workshop, national project staff started using some of the knowledge sharing techniques presented – including “future stories”, case study preparation, and peer group discussions – in their daily activities to advance the gender dimension of the project.

For more information on the SYNDICOOP project, please contact:
ILO's COOP (Cooperating out of Poverty) Programme: coop@ilo.org

Promoting freedom from debt bondage (India, Nepal, Pakistan)

Good practice elements:

- Gender analysis
- Gender planning
- Gender-specific actions
- Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation
- Knowledge sharing

Promoting the Prevention and Elimination of Bonded Labour in South Asia (PEBLISA)

Implemented with **government institutions, employers' organizations, trade unions and non-governmental organizations** in India, Nepal and Pakistan.

Across South Asia, problems of poverty, unequal power relations, and neglect for human and labour rights have been found to make poor women and men vulnerable to debt bondage – a web of economic and social obligations that prevent them from benefiting fully from development initiatives implemented by governments and partner organizations and keeps them trapped in poverty.

In this context, PEBLISA⁴ was launched to combat indebtedness and bonded labour as a way of enhancing poverty reduction efforts in the project countries. By testing an integrated set of economic and social services at community level to benefit both bonded families and those vulnerable to bondage, PEBLISA aimed to develop replicable approaches for the eradication of bonded labour.

⁴ Implemented under the ILO/Netherlands Partnership Programme 2004-06.

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

One of PEBLISA's achievements was its use of a participatory approach in working with project partners and beneficiaries to promote gender equality at household and community levels.

In all the project locations, the project promoted women's participation in community processes, including leadership roles, and their organization in Self-Help Groups for social and economic empowerment. In India and Nepal, where the project initially addressed women's groups only, efforts were made to gradually sensitise men and bring them into the project. This development reportedly led to a more equitable distribution of family responsibilities in project participants' households and had a noticeable impact on women's decision-making powers.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Gender analysis: identifying gender-based inequalities

Debt bondage is found throughout the South Asian region, particularly in traditional agriculture and in mining, brick making, rice milling, carpet weaving, stone cutting, and the sex industry. Discriminatory practices against women and girls throughout the region make them more vulnerable to bonded labour, especially since male family members commonly make decisions on loans and advances, major household expenditure and labour contracts.

With the aim of better understanding the complexities of bonded labour, PEBLISA undertook studies and rapid appraisals to explore, among other issues, the gender dimensions of bonded labour as well as the impact of project interventions on gender equality.

One of the most comprehensive gender analysis strategies was implemented in Tamil Nadu, India, where project staff conducted participatory research exercises with women and men to understand the gender-related factors underpinning household expenditures, life cycle events and power dynamics in households and communities.

Gender planning: setting feasible objectives to mainstream gender

In order to mainstream a gender perspective in all project activities, PEBLISA developed practical gender action plans for each field location. A sub-regional workshop on gender dynamics, held in New Delhi towards the end of PEBLISA's predecessor project, enabled the project's implementing partners to draw up action plans and implementation strategies for addressing gender inequality. The action plans included specific objectives to mainstream gender in a time-bound manner, listed practical activities under each component and provided indicators to measure the achievement of objectives.

**Gender-specific actions:
reaching female and male household members**

In order to approach gender equality in an integrated manner, PEBLISA designed gender-specific strategies for capacity building and awareness-raising. At the beginning of the project, sensitisation on gender issues and training-of-trainers workshops on gender mainstreaming were conducted for the project team and for staff from implementing partner organizations.

Subsequent workshops were held with client groups, comprising both women and men, on project sites. In India, for instance, the project delivered training and motivation sessions to “male support committees” on gender issues, focusing on how to promote equitable decision-making within the household, particularly on the use of family savings. In Nepal, PEBLISA’s partner organization took the lead in advancing gender sensitivity among project beneficiaries by raising the issue of women’s social empowerment in discussions with local women and their spouses.

**Monitoring:
measuring project performance and impact on gender equality**

In order to assess the project’s impact and progress on equality between women and men, PEBLISA developed and incorporated gender-sensitive indicators into project monitoring and evaluation. Across the different project components, gender-disaggregated data were collected through regular reviews. In cases where project activities had been expanded, new baselines were created to enable effective measurement of performance and impact. Such gender-sensitive baseline research was also used to assess other relevant issues, including equal opportunities in vocational training, health and life cycle events, such as marriage, illness or death, all of which tend to have an impact on household indebtedness.

**Knowledge sharing:
disseminating techniques for gender mainstreaming**

The project has been successful in disseminating and sharing gender mainstreaming experiences with implementing partners and with a range of other ILO programmes in the region. One of the project’s National Programme Coordinators, based in Tamil Nadu, had the role of Gender Adviser within the PEBLISA project team. In this capacity, she participated in inter-regional knowledge sharing events to share lessons with other ILO programmes.

For more information on PEBLISA, please contact:
ILO’s Subregional Office for South Asia (New Delhi): delhi@ilo.org

Promoting the rights of indigenous peoples through equal access to education and decent work (Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua)

Good practice elements:

- Needs assessment
- Gender planning
- Relevant gender expertise
- Capacity building on gender equality

Education for Work, Employment and Rights of Indigenous Peoples - ETEDPI

Launched by **governments** and **indigenous organizations** in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Social exclusion and high poverty rates are predominant among indigenous populations across Central America. Indigenous peoples tend to experience poorer living and working conditions than non-indigenous peoples – inequalities that are commonly amplified by discrimination based on gender. Compared to their male counterparts, indigenous women in the sub-region have restricted access to decent work opportunities and are predominantly occupied in domestic service, temporary agricultural work and assembly-line manufacturing.

In this context, the ETEDPI project⁵ aimed to reduce poverty and social exclusion amongst women and men through the promotion of indigenous rights, literacy, basic education and decent employment opportunities.

⁵ Implemented under the ILO/Netherlands Partnership Programme 2004-06.

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

ETEDPI consistently strove for gender-balance at all levels of project involvement, particularly in access to the project's education and training programmes and community decision-making.

In Nicaragua, the share of women and men who graduated from basic education courses under ETEDPI rose to 82% and 71%, respectively. In Honduras, gender-parity was achieved in participative community research activities related to the development of a methodology for "education for work" with indigenous peoples. In Guatemala, a woman heads the Board of Directors of the newly-established National Federation of Communal Tourism – an organization created with the support of ETEDPI – made up of 28 indigenous communities running 27 community tourist destinations. The Federation provides decent work opportunities to its members and facilitates dialogue between the government and the private tourist sector.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Needs assessment: identifying gender gaps

During the first stages of project implementation, needs assessments were conducted to map current gender balances in educational, training and productive activities among indigenous peoples in the project countries.

Through the programme "Continuous Education for Youths and Adults" under the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports in Nicaragua, ETEDPI conducted a literacy skills and education levels assessment among project beneficiaries from the Chorotega indigenous community. In response to the results, ETEDPI delivered adult education and training-of-trainers courses to upgrade literacy and educational levels – prioritising women's training. A training kit and video on indigenous women's rights, developed under an earlier ILO project, were used for this training and also in dedicated women's empowerment sessions.

In Honduras, ETEDPI produced an ethnographic profile of productive and reproductive labour practices among indigenous communities as background to the "education for work" methodology, which emphasised women's participation and empowerment. In Guatemala, indigenous women accounted for about 60% of all those participating in ETEDPI's literacy initiative, which was implemented in partnership with the National Committee of Literacy. The training provided them with sufficient education to qualify for enrolment in other vocational training courses, such as tourism administration and project management.

Gender planning: setting gender-sensitive project objectives

From the outset, ETEDPI and project partners designed gender-specific actions to ensure greater equality in project outcomes and also promoted gender-balance for participation in all project processes.

When creating the National Federation of Communal Tourism in Guatemala, gender equality was integrated into the Federation's overall objective to strengthen community-based tourism initiatives and protect indigenous cultural and natural resources. The Federation also adopted a plan of action to strengthen 28 indigenous communities' commitment to policy objectives on decent work opportunities, gender equality and children's rights in the management of 27 community tourism projects.

Establishing linkages with local expertise: supporting gender-specific activities

In order to promote women's empowerment and enhance women's and men's access to decent work amongst indigenous communities, ETEDPI worked closely with local institutions addressing women's rights issues in the project countries.

In Nicaragua, within the scope of its occupational training component, ETEDPI linked up with a Women's Programme and a Small and Medium Business Enterprises Programme for the delivery of vocational training courses adapted to the needs of indigenous peoples. In Honduras, project staff worked in partnership with the Honduran National Indigenous Women's Coordinating Organization to promote project ownership and enhance the capacity of other indigenous organizations and project partners to take positive action in favour of greater equality, including providing support to indigenous women's self-esteem and empowerment sessions.

Capacity building: ensuring gender-balance and gender-sensitivity among beneficiaries

ETEDPI carried out a series of sensitisation and capacity building activities on gender equality among project partners and beneficiaries.

A gender-sensitive manual for tourist guides from local tourist destinations was produced in collaboration with Guatemala's Productivity and Technical Training Institution.

Within the framework of the national "Initiative of Adaptation of the Model of Friendly and Healthy Schools to a Model of Friendly and Healthy Indigenous Schools" and syllabus reform in Nicaragua, ETEDPI delivered training workshops for indigenous leaders, teachers and parents on issues of rights, gender equality, elimination of child labour, and domestic violence. In Honduras, with the assistance of indigenous facilitators, the project developed a set of ethnographic community profiles as a way of understanding productive work patterns.

For more information on the ETEDPI project, please contact:
ILO's Subregional Office for Central America (San José): sanjose@ilo.org

Improving equal access to social protection and quality health care through rights promotion (Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Senegal)

Good practice elements:

- Needs assessment
- Capacity building on gender equality
- Gender-sensitive monitoring
- Gender analysis
- Knowledge sharing

Health Micro-insurance Schemes for Women and their Families

Implemented in collaboration with **community-based groups** and **social partners** at the local, national and international level in Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Senegal.

Social protection systems in many African countries do not provide full and adequate coverage to their economically active populations. Poor workers in agriculture and the informal sector – a significant proportion of whom are women – do not have access to social security and must rely on their capacity to work and save their incomes to protect themselves and their families against health contingencies. In addition to the harm caused to individual health, disease and accidents can also pose an economic and financial risk leading to incapacity to work, loss of income and material loss.

In order to address the need to extend social protection to these vulnerable groups, the project⁶ was implemented in four countries in West Africa with the specific aim of improving women's access to quality healthcare, including reproductive health services.

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

A significant achievement of the project was that it was able to strengthen the capacity of ILO's social partners to engage in dialogue concerning the health needs of both women and men and take positive action to promote equal rights to reproductive health.

⁶ Financed by the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and the ILO Strategies and Tools against social Exclusion and Poverty programme (ILO/STEP).

In Guinea, local authorities supported the establishment of health insurance schemes, helped raise local awareness of the schemes and facilitated their relations with local service providers. In Benin, the project facilitated the establishment of the Women's Mutual Aid Association and enhanced awareness amongst private service providers of the need to support mutual insurance schemes by offering more conducive contractual frameworks. In Senegal, the Dakar Union of Health Mutual Insurance Schemes established a partnership with the Dakar municipality with the aim of further supporting the development of the mutual insurance movement. In Burkina Faso, management committees of local health authorities established and are managing health micro-insurance schemes.

The project successfully empowered women by encouraging them to identify their needs for reproductive health care services and to pinpoint possible ways of improving the quality of such services through negotiations with providers. Subsequently, the project contributed to the establishment of over 100 mutual insurance schemes targeting more than 120,000 beneficiaries in the four countries, more than half of whom were women.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Needs assessment: identifying health needs of community-based groups of women and men

In order to ensure that health concerns, particularly reproductive health issues, were taken into account in the design of the mutual insurance schemes, the project undertook a series of participatory feasibility studies. The studies were mainly undertaken by committees of future members of the insurance schemes in close cooperation with health departments, local authorities and health service providers. The project provided technical assistance and training for facilitators, tools, methods and advice for the studies. The research identified the priority health service needs of community groups, as well as the availability and costs of such services. The findings were subsequently used as the basis for determining contributions to the insurance schemes and calculating the benefits.

Capacity building: raising awareness on equal access to health care

Capacity building on micro-insurance responses to health needs and mutual insurance schemes constituted a central component of the project's implementation strategy. A capacity building programme was designed which included local consultations and training workshops with community-based groups. Approximately 32,000 group members in the four project countries were trained in micro-insurance responses to health needs and in the operation of mutual insurance schemes. Thus, this capacity building strategy successfully involved the community-based group members, in particular women, in identifying their health needs. The project also enhanced ILO constituents' capacity to support the community-based groups. Furthermore, project staff launched a number of regional training-of-trainers workshops to promote a multiplier effect of the training activities.

So as to ensure that the project addressed reproductive health issues, awareness-raising activities and training sessions on reproductive health and women's rights were designed for each country resulting in 1,100 women leaders receiving training.

Monitoring: systematic supervision of users and services

The project set up monitoring and management support tools, including guides for administrative and financial management of mutual health insurance schemes, to consolidate the skills and information acquired during the training sessions. It also introduced management checklists consisting of various indicators which enabled the group schemes to effectively identify operational problems and monitor and strengthen activities on an ongoing basis. It distributed the checklists through software packages to mutual insurance schemes and relevant support institutions. In particular, the tools enhanced the mutual insurance schemes' capacity to monitor women's and men's equal access to health care services by registering membership patterns, the collection of contributions and benefits coverage.

Gender analysis and knowledge sharing: exchanging gender-sensitive approaches to health promotion

The project was designed to encourage the exchange of experience and the creation of networks among different groups in order to arrive at a better understanding of how micro-insurance could promote women's and men's equal access to health services through local action. As a result – rather than promoting a limited number of pre-defined health insurance models – the project encouraged the adaptation of existing models to local needs and conditions.

As part of its capacity building programme, the project facilitated the establishment and management of a regional knowledge sharing network named "Concerted action among the actors supporting the development of micro-insurance schemes in Africa". Through its website (www.concertaction.org), bi-annual fora, workshops and newsletters, the network has effectively promoted interaction and exchange of experiences among practitioners and advocates of health micro-insurance.

An additional aspect of the project's knowledge sharing initiatives has been the process of "capitalization of action research". This process involves the systematic collection and analysis of experiences and lessons learnt throughout the project's implementation phase leading to gradual development of knowledge and improved capacity in the operation of mutual health insurance schemes. Amongst other things, this effort facilitated adjustment of the methodologies employed for feasibility studies as well as fine-tuning of the management and monitoring of health mutual insurance schemes. Moreover, based on the experience of the first project phase, activities have been expanded to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda for a second phase.

For more information on the project, please contact:
ILO/STEP Regional Coordination for Africa: step_afr@sentoo.sn

Protecting girls and boys from exploitative domestic labour through gender-sensitive legal and policy reform (Cambodia, Indonesia)

Good practice elements:

- Gender analysis
- Capacity building on gender equality
- Adequate resources
- Relevant gender expertise
- Knowledge sharing

Preventing and Eliminating Exploitative Child Domestic Work through Education and Training in Southeast and East Asia (2nd phase)

Implemented with **government institutions, employers' organizations, trade unions and civil society organizations** in Cambodia and Indonesia.

Throughout Asia, child domestic labour is prevalent and has long been regarded as an "integral part of a child's development." Economic poverty, social exclusion and lack of access to education make girls and boys vulnerable to domestic labour, particularly in rural families. In this context, the second phase of the project⁷ was launched to contribute to efforts to protect girls and boys from domestic labour.

In Cambodia and Indonesia, the project aimed to create an enabling environment to address child domestic work through data collection, awareness raising and legal reforms, as well as to enhance the educational and skills levels of child domestic workers through improved access to educational opportunities.

⁷ Implemented under the ILO/Netherlands Partnership Programme 2004-06. The project focussed on eight countries in East and Southeast Asia, including Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

The project worked closely with the social partners to create a more gender-sensitive environment in which to combat exploitative child domestic labour.

In Indonesia, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Women's Empowerment, the project contributed to the development of legislation to protect children, especially young girls, from working. At the local level, the government of Kerawang drafted an anti-trafficking law to counter the widespread practice of trafficking young girls and boys with the aim of engaging them in employment. Moreover, a majority of the members of the Association of Indonesia Domestic Workers' Suppliers committed themselves to banning member suppliers from recruiting girls and boys below the age of 15 for domestic labour. In Cambodia, in cooperation with the Union Committee for Child Labour, the project contributed to developing trade union policy advocating against child domestic labour. It also improved children's access to educational opportunities by withdrawing girls and boys from work and at-risk situations and placing them in both formal educational and non-formal educational institutions in the two project countries.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Gender analysis: understanding differences in forms of exploitation and abuse

Given that children work in the privacy of employers' homes, their work is thus to some extent invisible to the outside world, and their vulnerability to exploitation and physical, emotional and sexual abuse increases. At the same time, differences between girls and boys make them vulnerable to different forms of exploitation and maltreatment. An analysis was carried out during the first phase of the project to identify the specific conditions, needs and aspirations of both female and male child domestic workers. The research revealed that girls constituted the majority of domestic workers and that they were subjected to particular kinds of mistreatment ranging from emotional oppression and subordination to physical abuse and sexual violence.

Capacity building: ensuring gender-sensitivity among project partners

Capacity building for social partners on gender issues related to child labour was considered key during project implementation. The initial gender analysis served as the basis for sensitisation and capacity building on the significance of gender roles and stereotypes, gender differentials in child labour and trafficking, and gender mainstreaming concepts and tools.

In Cambodia and Indonesia, the project conducted four gender-related training workshops focusing on building the capacity of the social partners and national machineries to fight child labour, to advocate on the issue and to increase their capacity to address gender mainstreaming in actions against child domestic labour.

The project put significant effort into the development of relevant and user-friendly tools. Among other things, the project translated and adapted “The Practical Guide for Organizations: Promotion of Gender Equality in Action against Child Labour and Trafficking” (“GECL Guide”) and developed an enhanced version of this tool entitled “GECL 3-R Training Kit”⁸.

At the local level, the project supported gender-sensitive workshops with social partners to promote equal access to educational opportunities for female and male domestic workers. Schoolteachers were also sensitised on the gender dimensions of child labour and were trained on how to identify and engage with child domestic workers.

A particular outcome of the project’s training strategy was the delivery of non-traditional skills training to girl domestic workers. The project collaborated with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to develop training curricula in computer usage and English, amongst other subjects.

Adequate resources and relevant expertise: integrating gender equality into project activities

The project budget included a specific allocation to support gender mainstreaming activities in both countries. In order to facilitate the implementation of these activities, project partners drew on relevant national gender expertise. In Indonesia, the project collaborated closely with the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment on a series of nationwide consultations, which culminated in the drafting of legislation to protect child domestic workers. In addition, the translation and adaptation of the above-mentioned “GECL Guide” was completed with support from the Gender and Development Studies Unit of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Indonesia. In Cambodia, work on the withdrawal and rehabilitation of child domestic workers was done in close partnership with the Women’s Development Association.

Knowledge sharing on gender mainstreaming

The project made a conscious effort to implement a knowledge sharing strategy on gender equality. The four gender training workshops in Cambodia and Indonesia were particularly effective fora for sharing information and tools on ways to integrate gender equality not only in the design, management, monitoring and evaluation of projects but also in the structures of implementing partners.

At the regional level, a knowledge sharing workshop, based on experiences from the participating project countries, was organised to address gender-sensitive methodologies for conducting research on child domestic work.

For more information on the project, please contact:
ILO’s Subregional Office for East Asia (Bangkok): bangkok@ilo.org

⁸ 3-R Training of Trainers: Empowerment for Children, Youth and Families Rights, Responsibilities and Representation.

Advancing equal employment opportunities through women's empowerment (Yemen)

Good practice elements:

- Needs assessment
- Capacity building on gender equality
- Relevant gender expertise
- Gender analysis
- Knowledge sharing

Strengthening the National Machinery for Advancing Women's Employment in Yemen

Launched in collaboration with the **Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour** and **social partners** in Yemen.

The Middle East region has traditionally had some of the lowest female labour force participation rates in the world. One of the reasons for this is that institutions responsible for employment commonly lack the capacity to address gender equality and women's rights issues when designing policies and programmes relating to the labour force.

Against this background, the project⁹ was designed to promote women's employment in Yemen by strengthening the role of the Directorate General of Women Workers, within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, to work with employers' and workers' organizations and play an active role in coordinating the development of the National Women's Employment Strategy (2001-2011).

⁹ Implemented under the ILO/Netherlands Partnership Programme 2004-06.

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

The project was able to enhance the capacity of ILO social partners to work together and assume ownership and responsibility for issues concerning both women and men workers and to promote equality within their organizations.

For the first time, the Labour Inspection Directorate, within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, committed itself to employing and investing in the capacities of women inspectors. In the trade unions, women are making progress in terms of active participation, partly because of the Training Programme on Decent Work and Gender Equality implemented under the project. The leadership within the Chambers of Commerce and Industry also committed itself to establishing business-women's committees and awareness-raising programmes to increase women's representation in their midst. In this way, the project developed a common platform for sustained dialogue between the tripartite social partners on gender equality.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Needs assessments: identifying requirements for gender-specific training

The project's initial efforts focused on strengthening the position of the Directorate General of Women Workers at the central and governorates levels. This work involved a series of three-monthly retreat workshops for staff from the Directorate and government counterparts. The workshops identified strengths and weaknesses in the Directorate's service delivery and addressed challenges through gender-sensitive training programmes on "How to organize workshops", "How to develop terms of reference" and "How to draft project proposals".

Moreover, in order to consolidate the skills and information acquired by staff in the Directorate, the project set up mechanisms – such as "supervision training visits" and project team meetings – to constantly assess needs and ways of responding to them.

Capacity building: promoting Decent Work and gender equality

The project's main capacity building tool was a training programme on Decent Work and gender equality, which was developed by a national tripartite expert team. One hundred participants were trained to deliver the training programme to around 40,000 trainees in five governorates over a two-year period. The trainers were drawn from the government as well as from employers' and workers' organizations.

In terms of specific capacity building within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the project set up mechanisms for dialogue, exchange and collaboration on gender issues amongst the relevant Directorates. These included coordination meetings between with the various Directorates in the Ministry with the aim of integrating gender issues into their respective work plans and identifying joint initiatives such as sharing sex-disaggregated data and employment-related information, monitoring women's and men's working conditions, and training activities.

**Establishing linkages with gender expertise:
mainstreaming gender in national development processes**

In order to reinforce political motivation to mainstream gender in national development processes, the project created a platform on gender issues for national advocates to interface with key policy-making institutions. A key objective of these alliances was the advancement of gender equality in the development of national poverty reduction priorities, such as the Millennium Development Goals and Yemen's Poverty Reduction Strategy. In particular, the alliances resulted in significant contributions to the country's national employment strategy, which forms a key component of Yemen's Decent Work Country Programme as well as the national development plan for 2006-2010. The alliances are being further institutionalised into a national network on gender and employment policy.

**Gender analysis and knowledge sharing:
understanding women's and men's working conditions**

Central to the project's success was an increase in the understanding of women's and men's working conditions in Yemen through the collection, analysis and application of sex-disaggregated data. Considering the often negative perceptions of working women in Yemeni society, as well as the limited understanding of workers' rights in general, the creation, management and sharing of information are crucial in dispelling existing myths. Over 200 workers' profiles were captured on video, audio and in written narrative and regularly used in the project's training, media and policy advocacy initiatives. The project website, bulletin and key studies have also been extensively utilised by the government, and employers' and workers' organizations.

For more information on the project, please contact:
ILO's Regional Office for the Arab States (Beirut): beirut@ilo.org

Promoting equal employment opportunities through social dialogue and policy development (Rwanda)

Good practice elements:

- Needs assessment
- Gender analysis
- Capacity building on gender equality
- Adequate resources
- Relevant gender expertise

Promotion of gender equality in the world of work (Rwanda)

Implemented with **government ministries, trade unions, employers' organizations, civil society organizations and women's groups** in Rwanda.

In a country where women occupy nearly half of all parliamentary seats and where there is considerable political will to promote gender equality at all levels of government, the project¹⁰ was specifically designed to support national commitment to advocate for equal employment opportunities in national development strategies. Its poverty reduction strategy focused on enhancing the working and living conditions of women and men in the informal economy by building the capacity of ILO constituents and social partners in Rwanda to promote equal access to decent work opportunities for women and men.

¹⁰ Implemented under the ILO Gender Equality Partnership Fund with resources from the ILO's own budget.

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

Through a tripartite steering committee, the project developed a strategy for strengthening the capacity of the social partners to promote gender equality through their mandates and within their own organizations. Efforts were made to integrate a gender equality perspective into the employment sector and labour-related policies as prescribed by national development plans, such as Rwanda's Vision 2020 document and the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS). In addition, the project established an effective framework for social dialogue on gender equality among ILO's constituents. A key output of the project was the development, through tripartite consultations, of a Five-Year Action Plan for the Promotion of Women's Employment as a practical instrument for promoting equal employment opportunities.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Needs assessment: identifying priority areas for gender-specific action

In order to ensure that the project would address the most relevant concerns of its tripartite stakeholders, a needs assessment was carried out at the project design stage. The ILO organised a planning mission to Rwanda involving a series of consultative meetings with ILO constituents and other relevant partners, such as the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, the Rwandan General Association for People with Disabilities and cooperative organizations. Three priority areas of action were identified, including the informal economy, gender and HIV/AIDS, and the ratification of ILO Conventions No. 183 on Maternity Protection and No. 144 on Social Dialogue, with special emphasis on the promotion of gender equality and women's participation. A project document was then developed together with the social partners, focusing on these three areas.

Gender analysis: gender-sensitive research as a baseline for project monitoring

As a starting point in the project's capacity building approach, sex-disaggregated data were compiled on a series of employment and labour-related issues. The project undertook three baseline studies on the general status of working women and men in the country, women's entrepreneurship, and women's and men's participation in trade unions and social dialogue structures. These data were later used as a baseline for monitoring project achievements.

Capacity building: specific training and awareness-raising activities on women's employment and gender equality

In total, more than 400 people from various associations were targeted by the project's capacity building programme for employment and self-employment promotion. Of the trainees, 65% were women and 35% were men. Training sessions focused on a wide range of issues, such as gender equality and the labour movement, women's entrepreneurship, gender budgeting, and key ILO Conventions on gender equality (No. 111 on Discrimination in Employment, No. 100 on Equal Remuneration, No. 156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities, and No. 183 on Maternity Protection). Training and awareness-raising activities on direct employment creation were also offered to women in the informal economy and women with disabilities. This training focused on the development of business plans, basket weaving, and other self-employment and business support services. Radio and TV were used as sensitisation tools and to complement the training programme.

Adequate resources and expertise: fostering partnerships in support of gender equality

An important focus of the project was its objective to foster close cooperation and partnerships amongst project partners. Through the project, the Rwandan Ministry of Labour forged alliances with institutions and organizations with significant expertise in gender equality promotion in the Rwandan context, including the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) whose mission is to set and coordinate the implementation of the national gender policies. Collaboration was also initiated with other international organizations such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Canadian Gender and Development Fund.

Finally, the project shared its experiences with other ILO projects in Rwanda and benefited from their lessons learnt. In July 2005, for instance, the project held a joint seminar with the ILO SYNDICOOP project (see Case Study No.1) to share knowledge on measures to mainstream gender into poverty reduction efforts amongst informal economy workers.

For more information on the project, please contact:
ILO's Subregional Office for Central Africa (Yaoundé): yaounde@ilo.org

Extending health care to workers in the informal economy through equal access to social protection schemes (Philippines)

Good practice elements:

- Gender analysis
- Capacity building on gender equality
- Adequate resources
- Relevant gender expertise
- Knowledge sharing

Extension of Social Protection in Health to Informal Economy Workers

Launched in the Philippines in cooperation with **community-based organizations, cooperatives and workers' organizations**.

In many Southeast Asian countries, informal economy workers and their families do not enjoy adequate health care coverage and financial protection against illness, work-related accidents and other life contingencies. The economic and social burdens resulting from reductions in earnings through absence from the workplace characterise the social protection deficit in the informal economy.

The project¹¹ was launched in 2003 to address this deficit. It aimed to enhance the quality of life for informal economy workers and their families by improving their access to health care services and benefits through micro-health insurance schemes.

¹¹ Implemented with support from the Government of Norway.

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

One of the project's achievements was that it was able to integrate the gender dimension when establishing partnerships with implementing organizations to mobilise, manage and provide health micro-insurance to informal economy workers and their families. Through the project, poor women played a key role in managing these schemes and contributing to health systems reform, including setting up an improved referral system and expanding health insurance coverage.

The project's advocacy strategy spurred the Philippines Health Insurance Corporation to start exploring ways of introducing a partial subsidy mechanism for poor women and men working in the informal economy. In addition, the Department of Agrarian Reform took initial steps towards mainstreaming gender within the Department by adopting gender-sensitive guidelines for its staff members.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Gender analysis: identifying women's and men's need for social protection in health

The project included gender analysis as part of implementation planning. Given that women represent a significant proportion of informal economy workers – often holding the most precarious jobs with little pay – the analysis was designed to identify their specific concerns and needs vis-à-vis their male counterparts. An initial gender analysis was conducted in one community, which then served to guide similar analyses in other participating communities. The needs assessment not only facilitated and guided project planning but also provided baseline data for the later monitoring of project achievements.

Although the project's initial objective had been to provide health micro-insurance mainly to women in the informal economy, the needs assessment highlighted the importance of “bringing men into the picture” to allow family members to support each other and access health care.

Capacity building: raising awareness on gender equality and health promotion

A training programme, including capacity building on gender-sensitive delivery of micro-health insurance, constituted a key component of the project's gender mainstreaming strategy.

The project included a training package on “Management of a Gender-Sensitive Health Micro-Insurance Scheme” for leaders of cooperatives, managers of health micro-insurance schemes, and representatives from local government units and the Department of Land Reform. Similarly, a training workshop on “Gendered Approach to Social Protection in the Philippines” was designed and implemented with representatives from informal workers' groups, national government agencies, local government structures, workers' organizations, and the business community.

In terms of materials, the project developed two sets of capacity building training tools. The first of these, which was developed with the aim of raising awareness on health insurance amongst members of community-based organizations and micro-insurance schemes, included user-friendly reference materials such as flip charts and brochures. These were first developed in English and then translated into local languages after pre-testing and revision. The second set of materials was developed with the aim of raising awareness amongst community leaders, politicians and government officials. Both sets of training tools paid particular attention to the inclusion of the gender dimension in the establishment and management of health micro-insurance schemes.

Adequate resources and relevant expertise: mainstreaming gender equality in project activities

The implementing partners attracted technical expertise on gender issues in support of gender mainstreaming in the project's activities. A gender consultant was engaged to provide technical support to the integration of gender concerns in project activities and training materials. Moreover, the project workshop on a "Gendered Approach to Social Protection in the Philippines" focused on building the gender mainstreaming capacity of project staff and social partners.

Collaboration with civil society organizations with a strong role in advocacy work on gender equality helped reinforce the project's advocacy efforts. An example of this was PATAMABA (Pambansang Tagapagugnay ng mga Manggagawa sa Bahay), a national umbrella organization for home-based workers with a large proportion of women members, which works in partnership with local government units to implement health reform at the municipal level. PATAMABA was a key project partner and disseminated information on access to health care and micro-insurance and on approaches to organising different informal economy workers' groups.

Knowledge sharing on ways to expand social protection coverage to women and men

The project emphasised the exchange of experiences and lessons learnt amongst project partners. The gender training programme, in particular, offered the opportunity for partners to learn from one another by sharing their experiences in promoting a gender-sensitive approach to social protection coverage through micro-health insurance.

Furthermore, a series of study visits to other countries enabled the project team to share their experiences and learn from other local and international initiatives that aimed to expand social protection coverage to female and male workers in the informal economy.

For more information on the project, please contact:
ILO's Subregional Office for South-East Asia and the Pacific (Manila):
manila@ilo.org, or the ILO STEP Programme: step@ilo.org

Reducing the decent work deficit amongst women and men workers in the informal economy through social dialogue on gender equality and employment (Ecuador)

Good practice elements:

- Gender analysis
- Capacity building on gender equality
- Gender planning
- Relevant gender expertise
- Knowledge sharing

Poverty reduction, employment generation and gender equality promotion policies for the informal economy in Latin America - GRPE

Launched with **government agencies, employers' organizations and trade unions** in Ecuador.

The labour market situation in Ecuador is characterised by increasing unemployment rates and labour force participation in the informal economy. Moreover, the decent work deficit is considerable amongst informal workers and often distinguished by inadequate incomes, lack of social protection, hazardous and unsafe working conditions and by the absence of international labour standards protection. The situation is often more severe for women who make up a disproportionate number of the unemployed and of those working in the informal economy.

Within the framework of government efforts to draw up a new employment action plan for 2005-2006, the project¹² aimed to reduce poverty and decent work deficits amongst informal economy workers in the country. It focused on improving informal workers' living and working conditions and incorporating gender equality and ethnic dimensions into national policies, strategies and programmes on poverty reduction and employment promotion.

¹² Implemented with support from the UK Department for International Development.

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

The project worked closely with ILO constituents to develop a more gender-sensitive approach to designing and implementing poverty reduction and employment generation policies.

At the national level, the Board on Employment and Gender Policy of Quito resumed its functions within the Ministry of Labour and was further reinforced with a new Gender and Youth Unit.

At the local level, the Board on Gender, Employment, Tourism and Microfinance in Azuay Province was established and its counterpart in Guayas Province strengthened. Both boards comprised of representatives from government, civil society and the private business community. The project provided opportunities for continued dialogue between the tripartite social partners on gender equality and for the increased participation of women in the labour market, mostly through the project's training programme on gender, poverty and employment.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Gender analysis: reinforcing awareness-raising efforts

In order to provide a solid understanding of both women's and men's working conditions in the country, the project developed a research plan and subsequently commissioned five studies on the interrelated issues of gender, employment and ethnicity, with special attention to the informal economy. The project invited the research consultants to share their findings in an awareness-raising session for project stakeholders. This also ensured that the consultants received feedback and recommendations from the workshop participants.

Capacity building: setting up mechanisms for dialogue on gender and employment

In its approach to capacity building, the project aimed to develop sustainable mechanisms for dialogue on gender equality amongst representatives of government, employers' and workers' organizations, and civil society organizations. The project's capacity building strategy played a key role in supporting strategic planning activities and the development of work plans for the boards on gender and employment at national and provincial levels as well as the adoption of a Declaration on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities to Decent Work by Ecuador's tripartite National Labour Council.

In addition, the strategy included a training-of-trainers programme on gender, poverty and employment. More than 20 participants were trained through this initiative and eventually formed an expert team, which could deliver the training programme to women and men within the tripartite organizations.

Gender planning for strategic objectives

The project's capacity building efforts focused on enhancing the capacity of the boards on gender and employment at national and provincial levels through a participatory and consensual approach delivered at work meetings and workshops for board members.

In response to members' requests for technical assistance in strategic planning activities, the project organised a series of strategic planning workshops where members identified relevant strengths, weaknesses and challenges in policy design and implementation. These workshops culminated in the development of gender-sensitive action plans.

Establishing linkages with relevant expertise: building capacity on gender mainstreaming

The project worked in close cooperation with national advocates and experts on gender equality with the overall aim of strengthening the political will to mainstream gender in the development and implementation of employment and poverty reduction policies.

More specifically, the project worked in partnership with the Women's National Council in an effort to mainstream gender in Ecuador's Employment Agenda and to develop the action plans of the two provincial boards on gender and employment issues. At the national level, the project set up coordination mechanisms with another initiative on Gender and the Economy implemented by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL). The project and its partners worked together to enhance the capacity of the Women's National Council in the organization of an international seminar on gender and employment in the country, which was supported by the Ministry of Labour.

Knowledge sharing on gender mainstreaming

One of the project's key components was its emphasis on knowledge sharing and the national and local boards on gender and employment constituted effective structures for sharing information on project activities and outcomes to a wider audience.

As part of its knowledge sharing strategy, the project sent a delegation of government and trade union representatives to take part in a course on bargaining techniques for representatives of employers' and workers' organizations, which was organised by the ILO's Subregional Office in Santiago, Chile, and the ILO International Training Centre in Turin, Italy. The aim was to facilitate networking between the delegation and representatives from the Tripartite Commissions on Equal Opportunity in the Southern Cone. The initiative promoted the exchange of good practices, including approaches to gender-sensitive collective bargaining. The methodology used in the training was later incorporated into a national seminar in Ecuador targeting government representatives.

For more information on the project, please contact:
ILO's Subregional Office for the Andean Countries (Lima): osra@oit.org.pe

Gender-equitable access to decent work through skills development and vocational training (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia)

Good practice elements:

- Gender analysis
- Gender planning
- Adequate resources
- Relevant gender expertise
- Gender-specific actions
- Knowledge sharing

Increasing employability of disadvantaged young women and men and other marginalized groups in Caucasus and Central Asia through skills development and entrepreneurial education

Implemented with national employment services, technical and vocational training institutions, employers' organizations and trade unions in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia.

In the former Soviet Union republics, problems of unemployment, underemployment and poverty have remained particularly acute following the deterioration of social and economic conditions during the transition period. For young women and men, the situation is particularly worrying, with unemployment rates for those aged 16-24 significantly higher than for adults. This situation is further exacerbated for young women who are facing increased segregation and discrimination in the labour market.

The project¹³ was implemented with the aim of contributing to poverty reduction in the Caucasus and Central Asia by increasing the employability of young women and men and other marginalized groups through enhanced skills development and entrepreneurial training. In particular, the project aimed to strengthen skills development and entrepreneurial education through improved vocational training and career guidance and through the introduction of basic "business training" in the curricula of vocational institutions' and employment services' retraining programmes.

¹³ Implemented under the ILO/Netherlands Partnership Programme 2004-06.

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

Gender-specific interventions within the project focused on awareness-raising and sensitisation of social partners in the target countries, developing adapted gender mainstreaming tools, and on providing capacity building to national institutions. Special organizational arrangements were made to promote gender balance in project activities to ensure that both women and men had equal access to skills development and entrepreneurial training.

In the Start and Improve Your Business/Know About Business (SIYB/KAB) training programmes, conducted in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, women accounted for more than 40% of entrepreneurs, trainers and master-trainers. In Kyrgyzstan, the social partners developed policies and action plans on equal opportunities.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Gender analysis: drawing on lessons learnt in the project design

In order to obtain a better understanding of the labour market situation and to identify areas of skills development that could facilitate the school-to-work transition for young women and men, the project systematically collected and applied sex-disaggregated data in studies and technical reports.

Moreover, in the project design, project staff carefully drew on results and lessons from previous ILO interventions in the region – including the SIYB/KAB programme in Central Asia and projects on women’s entrepreneurship development in the Caucasus – so as to more effectively mainstream gender issues into the implementation cycle.

As part of its gender mainstreaming strategy, the project included an analysis of lessons learnt from previous ILO projects in the region in order to ensure that project actions were based on a solid understanding of the situation of young women and men.

Gender planning: a two-pronged approach to promoting gender equality

During the design stage, project staff adopted a two-pronged approach to promoting gender equality by combining gender mainstreamed activities with gender-specific activities. In practice, attempts to mainstream gender into the technical activities of skills development and entrepreneurial education were complemented by a gender-specific component aiming to raise awareness on gender issues in general among project staff and the social partners. The gender-specific component was found to reinforce the gender mainstreamed activities by providing a basic understanding of the gender dimensions of the respective technical areas.

Adequate resources and expertise: supporting gender mainstreaming in project activities

The project allocated USD 300,000 of its budget to support the implementation of its gender mainstreaming strategy, including the gender-specific component. The project set up an expert working group composed of national gender specialists, project coordinators from the relevant countries and an ILO gender specialist, which backstopped the implementation of gender-related project activities.

Gender-specific actions: building capacity and partnerships

During implementation, the expert working group facilitated capacity building workshops on gender mainstreaming for project staff and the social partners ensuring a balance of women and men participants through targeted letters of invitation and in other selection procedures.

As part of the capacity building strategy, a series of gender mainstreaming tools and materials were developed, translated into Russian and adapted for the project. These included a capacity building package on gender mainstreaming in technical cooperation projects and a guidebook on conducting gender training for journalists.

The project's training programme for journalists addressed, in particular, gender stereotypical attitudes throughout the region. The work with mass media was launched through a set of roundtable discussions for journalists in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, and culminated in a national media contest on the best publication, TV or radio programme on gender-related issues. The project also ran an innovative media campaign to address gender stereotypical attitudes throughout the region

The project's capacity building tools and materials were all prepared with support from the ILO and relevant gender expertise in the region. In developing a series of gender-sensitive training tools for the media, close collaboration was established with experts of the Moscow Centre for Gender Studies, the Higher School of Economics and the regional branch of the International Federation of Journalists.

Knowledge sharing: systematic exchange of approaches to gender equality

The project established mechanisms for knowledge sharing and linkages with other ILO projects, for example, through a virtual forum and other knowledge sharing initiatives within the ILO. The project addressed methodologies and approaches to gender equality at workshops in which all project countries participated. Knowledge sharing workshops were also held with the participation of other Central Asian countries involved in the implementation of SIYB/KAB training programmes.

For more information on the SYNDICCOP project, please contact:

ILO's Subregional Office for Eastern Europe and
Central Asia (Moscow): moscow@ilo.org

Promoting decent work for women and men workers through enhanced access to training (India)

Good practice elements:

- Needs assessment
- Capacity building on gender equality
- Knowledge sharing
- Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation

Decent Employment for Women in India

Implemented with the **Ministry of Labour, training and research institutes and civil society organizations.**

In India, poor women and men represent a significant proportion of informal workers engaged in low paying, precarious and exploitative working conditions in the urban slums. Due to their limited decision-making powers within the household, as well as restricted access to basic health services and formal education, the situation for women is especially precarious.

With the purpose of improving the working and living conditions of poor women, the project¹⁴ was designed to promote women's employment by extending the services of formal vocational training institutions to the informal sector. Public institutions had not previously included the informal sector and the project was one of the first attempts to introduce non-formal training for poor women and men in the government's training programmes and provide policy inputs for possible replication.

¹⁴ Implemented with support from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL).

How the project promoted gender equality in the world of work

The project successfully fostered close cooperation amongst the social partners to empower poor women and promote decent work opportunities for female and male workers in the urban informal economy. Within six months of completing vocational and soft-skills training, approximately 70% of the women trained under the project were involved in income generating activities, most of whom were self-employed. This helped increase monthly household incomes and improve the health of the trainees and their families. Moreover, by developing linkages between formal-informal training providers and through the delivery of non-formal training to poor and illiterate women, the project demonstrated the value of non-formal training for informal economy workers within the government's training institutions and programmes.

Good practice elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy

Needs assessment: identifying the need for gender-specific training

Initially, the project conducted a series of community needs assessments over a period of five months. One of the main objectives of this exercise was to map and select civil society organizations as training providers. It was found that only a very few organizations had had previous experience in the delivery of vocational training for poor workers in the informal economy.

Following the selection of partner organizations, a rapid household needs and economic opportunities assessment was carried out in slum communities. This was done with the purpose of assessing communities' demographic and socio-economic profiles, as well as poor women's employment needs, including their need for gender-specific skills training.

Capacity building: comprehensive strategy for promoting decent work and women workers' rights

The capacity building strategy was a key component of the project and involved building the capacity of public and non-government training providers on decent work opportunities and women workers' rights. A total of 48 master-trainers were trained from the National Vocational Training Institute for Women (NVTI), Noida, the Regional Vocational Training Institute Bangalore (RVTI), and from the Delhi Industrial Training Institute for Women.

In terms of non-governmental organizations, the project trained 45 trainers from eight partner organizations in the delivery of vocational training for poor and illiterate/low-literate women in both traditional and non-traditional fields such as garment making, handicrafts, plumbing, masonry and taxi driving.

In 2004, the project organised a "Gender Sensitivity Workshop" with the participation of government officials, non-governmental organizations and members from the Central Board of Workers' Education and Skill Training Institutions.

Another component of the project's capacity building strategy was the development and testing of high-quality training materials. A total of 11 manuals – comprising 23 modules – were developed on vocational, soft and entrepreneurial skills training. Master-trainers and trainers all took part in workshops focusing on the development and pilot testing of the materials, as well as in the actual training of the women targeted by project. An audio-visual laboratory was also set up at the NVTI to prepare short training clippings on the critical elements of skills development. Master-trainers from the NVTI and the RVTI were trained and prepared short audio-visual training aids for the target group.

In terms of the direct training of project beneficiaries, the social partners participated in designing a "holistic" training strategy. A number of trainees received a comprehensive package of pre-training, training and post-training support services, including counselling, health assistance, childcare and allowances for transportation to and from the training venues.

**Knowledge sharing:
collecting and sharing information on gender mainstreaming**

The project designed a knowledge sharing strategy for the social partners to facilitate information sharing on gender issues. A key achievement in this respect was the establishment of a Gender Resource Centre at the V. V. Giri National Labour Institute intended to serve as an effective mechanism for sharing experiences and good practices on promoting gender equality. With additional financial support from the Institute, the Resource Centre has become fully operational. It is part of the Institute's main library and has published a wide range of documents focussing on various gender-related issues in the world of work. The Institute has also made efforts to incorporate the gender dimension into ongoing training programmes.

Monitoring: systematic efforts to assess project performance and impact on gender equality

The project's ability to closely monitor activities carried out by the partner organizations delivering training to target groups contributed to its success.

The project team also evaluated the activities of training providers, including those of public and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), by reviewing training plans, conducting regular field visits during training and obtaining information through regular progress reports. Results from internal and external evaluations of trainees' skills and employability levels at the end of the training programmes also served to assess the project's performance and impact on gender equality.

A Database Centre has also been set up at the NVTI to collect, compile and disseminate information on skills development for women in the informal economy.

For more information on the project, please contact:
ILO's Subregional Office for South Asia (New Delhi): delhi@ilo.org, or
the ILO Programme on Promoting the Declaration: declaration@ilo.org