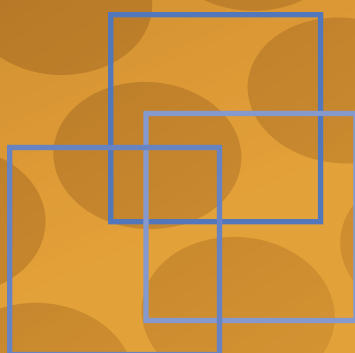




International  
Labour  
Office  
Geneva

# Gender Mainstreaming in Local Economic Development Strategies

A guide



ILO Bureau for Gender Equality



# **Gender Mainstreaming in Local Economic Development Strategies**

**A guide**

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## List of Acronyms

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<b>BDS</b>	Business Development Services
<b>GEA</b>	Global Employment Agenda
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>LED</b>	Local Economic Development
<b>LEDA</b>	Local Economic Development Agency
<b>MSME</b>	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises

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# 1 Introduction

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Taking into account the needs, priorities and opinions of both women and men of the territory, ensuring that both benefit equally from social change and economic growth, and that gender inequalities are eliminated, are all essential for the success of any local economic development (LED) strategy aimed at creating decent work opportunities. However, in societies where women's participation in public affairs is severely restricted by tradition, economic disadvantage and lower education this is easier said than done.

Obtaining the full participation of women in an LED process will require overcoming deeply entrenched discriminatory attitudes and challenging existing power structures. Where women enjoy relatively equal access to decision-making structures and resources, the LED approach will serve to strengthen their participation in the private sector, paying greater attention to their needs in terms of business development services (BDS), access to financial resources, association-building, knowledge about rights, rules and regulations, etc.

While national policy should provide an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming, it must be accompanied by targeted interventions at the local level. These, if carried out consistently over a certain period of time, generally yield perceptible results.

## 1.1 Objectives of this module

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This guide is designed to assist LED practitioners – staff from international organizations, international development agencies and local authorities– in identifying and addressing the sometimes different needs and priorities of women and men, facilitating their full participation at every stage of the LED process, and contributing to gender equality objectives and outcomes.

Using this guide will enable practitioners to:

- understand why gender equality should be pursued at the local level;
- be aware of the barriers to women's participation that may be encountered; and
- identify and implement strategies for addressing gender concerns throughout the LED process.

Since gender mainstreaming should be context-specific, the recommendations made must be considered as indicative guidelines rather than recipes for action. Under each section, reference is made to tools, further readings and checklists that can be used in project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

## 1.2 Structure

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The first part of this module introduces key concepts, describes the potential role that women and men can play in the local economy, and points out the barriers to women's representation and participation that need to be overcome. Questions that this guide strives to answer in this section are:

- How are gender equality, gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting defined?
- What is the link between gender equality and decent work?
- Why is gender equality important for local economic development?



The second part recalls the basic characteristics of LED and identifies strategies that have been and can be used to reduce gender gaps and strengthen women's participation in each of the six phases of the LED process. Questions that this section answers are:

- Which measures can enhance an equal participation of women and men in decision-making structures at the local level?
- How can the potential contribution of women and men to the local economy in their different capacities be promoted and strengthened?
- How can local economic development strategies and implementation structures be made gender-responsive?

The module concludes with a precautionary note about the time frame required to achieve gender equality at the local level.

## 2 Advancing gender equality at the local level

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Reading this chapter will help clarify concepts related to gender mainstreaming, highlight the various roles of women and men in development and the gender issues associated with them, and recalling the barriers that discriminated groups can face.

### Box 1. The ILO mandate to promote gender equality

Promoting the rights of women at work and achieving equality between women and men have been fundamental principles underpinning the work of the ILO since its creation in 1919. The ILO promotes gender equality as intrinsic to the global goal of decent work and poverty alleviation, and as an instrument for a more inclusive globalization. This commitment is expressed in several Conventions and resolutions that have been passed by the ILO. More recently, the Report of the Committee on Gender Equality of the International Labour Conference held in 2009 states that “Gender equality is a matter of social justice and is anchored in both a rights-based and an economic efficiency approach. When all actors of society can participate, there are much better chances for social justice and economic efficiency, as well as economic growth and development. Cultural, economic and social barriers have to be identified and overcome in order for women’s human rights to be respected. Sex discrimination frequently interacts with other forms of discrimination. Policies and programmes should be out in place to address multiple forms of discrimination against women!”

### 2.1 Some key concepts<sup>2</sup>

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#### Gender

While sex refers to the biological differences between females and males and which are universal, gender refers to social attributes and opportunities associated with being a female or a male and the relationships between women and men, girls and boys. These attributes, relationships and opportunities are socially constructed and learned in a socialization process. They vary across time and space, between societies and cultures. They are therefore context-specific and can be modified.

#### Gender roles

Gender roles are what a society or culture constructs and prescribes as proper roles, behaviour and personal identities for women and men. Gender roles and characteristics affect power relations between women and men at all level and can result in inequality in opportunities and outcomes for some groups. Gender roles often associate women with femininity and men with masculinity, with the later given higher value.

## Gender equality

Gender equality does not mean that women and men are or should become the same, but it does mean that women and men should have equal rights and equal opportunities in all spheres of life. It is based on women and men being equal partners in their home, their community and their society. In the context of local economic development, it means that participation in governance, and access to decent employment opportunities and conditions of work, to resources, and to services, are not negatively influenced by the fact that one is male or female.

## Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy or process that aims to achieve gender equality. It means, on the one hand, that policies, programmes and institutional structures are in place to redress existing inequalities and to preserve equality between women and men. On the other hand, it means that measures to address the specific needs and priorities of women and men, either separately or together, are adopted. A participatory approach such as LED requires not only a balanced representation of women and men participating in the process, but the creation of conditions in which opinions of all participants are freely voiced and defended. In addition, the planning and implementation of LED strategies need to be truly responsive to the specific and at times different concerns of women and men.

Successful gender mainstreaming in local economic development processes brings about fundamental changes in power relations between women and men.

*“Mainstreaming is not about adding a “woman’s component” or even a “gender equality component” into an existing activity. It goes beyond increasing women’s participation; it means bringing the experience, knowledge, and interests of women and men to bear on the development agenda. It may entail identifying the need for changes in that agenda. It may require changes in goals, strategies, and actions so that both women and men can influence, participate in, and benefit from development processes. The goal of mainstreaming gender equality is thus the transformation of unequal social and institutional structures into equal and just structures for both men and women.”<sup>3</sup>*

In areas where women or men are in a particularly disadvantageous position due to past discrimination, **affirmative action** may be required to correct the imbalance. These are temporary, gender-specific interventions conferring certain advantages on the disadvantaged group that enable it to participate in and benefit equally from development efforts.

## Gender budgeting

Budgets are an effective tool for promoting gender equality. Rather than having a specific provision in the budget of local authorities for programmes targeting women and girls, gender budgeting implies that in drawing up the whole budget, resources are allocated on the basis of the analysis done of the practical needs and strategic interests of women and men and the demands expressed by their representatives. It involves therefore an analysis of the entire budget in terms of its benefits for women and men.

Questions that can be used to assess if the budget of an initiative is gender-responsive are: has an analysis been made on the impact that the budget allocation will have for men and women?

Does the budget explicitly allocate resources to gender-related work, if this is deemed necessary? (e.g. gender training, ad-hoc or continuous gender expertise; missions for gender specialists, etc.); does it identify and put in place any mechanism for reporting purposes that monitors the resources allocated and spent on gender equality goals?

In the context of LED, it is necessary to analyse the impacts of existing budgets and their underlying policies on men and women to assess whether they are reducing inequalities or increasing and perpetuating them.

## **2.2 The economic case for gender equality**

Today, there is growing consensus about the importance of women as essential economic actors. Around the world, women's growing participation in employment is offering an important contribution to national growth rates and economic viability. Yet, gender gaps in the world of work remain in most countries, affecting productivity and competitiveness. While widely regarded as a legitimate goal, gender equality can still be perceived by some as having potential costs for business and economic growth. Here, we emphasize that gender equality contributes to economic development in a number of ways and that the full participation of women as economic actors is essential to build healthy and sustainable economies.

Gender-based discrimination in the world of work is due to prevailing social norms and gender roles that are often slow to change. Despite substantial progress made in promoting gender equality in employment during the last half a century, a high percentage of women still remain in sex-stereotype occupations, that are often more precarious, vulnerable and with lower remuneration than men's. Gender wage gaps also persist across countries, for work of equal value. As a consequence, compared to men women are disproportionately more affected by decent work deficits, and hence poverty. This fact is not only detrimental to women and their families, but also poses a heavy burden for the economy. More and better jobs for both women and men can boost local productivity and enhance the demand for goods and services in the local economy through increased consumption.

Gender inequality does not only manifest itself at the lower levels of the job market, but it can also be seen in high level positions. Despite their increasing educational attainment rates, women represent only 10% of board members in the largest companies listed on the stock exchange of EU Member States. This figure falls to 3% in the case of women at the highest decision-making level in the same companies.<sup>4</sup> There is considerable evidence that proves that an appropriate leverage of the talents of women and men, a better diversification of women and men in occupations and an enhanced balance in decision-making structures in enterprises can improve competitive advantage and increase a firm's productivity. Closing gender gaps in the world of work is therefore not only an issue of equality of rights, but also an issue of economic concern.

The importance of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) for local economies can hardly be disputed. Even though their importance varies across countries, it has been recognized that MSMEs are a key engine of growth and a source of employment for a significant percentage of the labour force. In countries such as Chile, Greece and Thailand, the contribution of MSMEs to employment is more than 80%. There is evidence that shows that countries with a higher level of GDP per capita have a larger share of MSMEs in terms of their contribution to total employment and GDP.<sup>5</sup> In Europe, MSMEs account for over 80% of employment in certain sectors, such as textiles, construction and furniture.<sup>6</sup>

There are several reasons why MSMEs should strive to have a gender-balanced work force. In the first place, women's educational attainments have increased significantly in the last decades, with more women graduating from technical and scientific subjects. Discrimination against women in recruitment implies that enterprises are not tapping the pool of skilled women whose talent is underutilized. Secondly, the differences between male and female employees can bring substantive benefits to enterprises. As businesses work in a heterogeneous and often unpredictable market, a range of diverse expertise within an enterprise can enable it to upgrade its skills and be more reactive to change. Gender balance in management teams can upgrade innovation capacity and increase profitability in terms of revenues and assets.

Although clearly not exhaustive, the above-mentioned arguments demonstrate that there is an economic case for gender equality. Adequate gender equality policy frameworks at the national and local level should be designed and effectively implemented to ensure equal access and opportunities for career development for both men and women in the labour market.

The following section presents the various roles that women and men play in the local economy and explores some of the causes that constrain the fulfilment of these roles.

### **2.3 Potential role of women and men in the local economy**

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Both women and men contribute to the local economy in various capacities and possess distinct knowledge and skills that correspond to these roles. These are the building blocks for realizing the potential of a locality. There are certain gender issues associated with each of these roles and actions that can help address them.

#### **As citizens**

In a democracy, citizens influence the development agenda through their electoral choices and through engaging in public debate on decisions by the government they have elected. However, the ability to defend one's rights effectively and lobby for one's interests with the local government often requires collective action. In areas where power is concentrated in the hands of a few, the organization of common interest groups of women, farmers, business owners, residents of a neighbourhood, etc., and their linkage to similar groups elsewhere has contributed to ensure that the benefits of development are sustainable and more equitably distributed.

Small association building as part of an LED process can therefore contribute to give women a voice in local-decision making bodies. Training courses in gender and leadership can be considered to strengthen skills such as speaking in public, negotiation, networking, etc. Sensitization campaigns can help raise awareness on how some practices within organizations and institutions can be detrimental to achieve gender equality. In countries where women face barriers to organize themselves, theatre plays and radio programmes can be used to support changes in the way people perceive collectivism, also serving to provide training contents to those living in remote areas.

ILO Tools and further reading on association building:

- Building Women Entrepreneurs' Associations: Capacity Building Guide. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme
- Empowerment for children, youth and families: 3-R trainers' kit on rights, responsibilities and representation. ILO Bangkok

- Business Group Formation: Empowering Women and Men in Developing Communities. Trainer's Manual. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme
- Guidelines on the Formation of Self-help Groups – For families of Working Children. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme
- Leadership Training Manual for Women Leaders of Cooperatives. Cooperatives Programme
- Managing Small Business Associations: A Trainer's Manual. Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise Development Unit

### As elected representatives

Participation of women in local governance structures is often easier to achieve than participation at the national level, as eligibility criteria are less stringent and women know well their communities and the opportunities and challenges that are faced.

Proportionate representation of the different social groups within the local government can help to ensure that development plans and processes are responsive to the interests of these groups and that social friction arising from a conflict of interests is resolved through negotiation. Given the difficulties women face in fighting elections, several countries have taken affirmative action by reserving a certain proportion of seats for women in representative bodies. To name only a few, Tanzania, Uganda, Mexico and Brazil have legislated quotas for women at national and sub-national levels. India has legislated quotas at sub-national levels, and countries such as Chile, Colombia and Thailand have voluntary quotas adopted by political parties<sup>7</sup>.

However, it is important to mention that gender balance in elected bodies does not ensure by itself the promotion of gender equality, as some women may feel unable to challenge patriarchal structures or may not necessarily represent the interest of women. Capacity building of local authorities –including men and women– on gender awareness can contribute to a better representation of the female constituency.

#### Box 2. The PROLEAD Programme of the Inter-American Development Bank

The PROLEAD programme, founded in 1998, provides financial resources to local organizations that promote greater participation and leadership of women in politics in their countries and communities. Objectives of the programme are: (i) to make financial resources available to organizations that work to promote women's participation and leadership in Latin America and the Caribbean; (ii) to promote networks and the capacity of organizations and women leaders that support women's leadership and citizen participation; and (iii) to encourage greater involvement of the donor community in supporting women's leadership in the region. These objectives are achieved through three components consisting of grant-making, institutional strengthening and networking.

Promoting women's participation in the political sphere is particularly important: according to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in those countries in Latin America where the reservation of a certain proportion of seats for women in the parliament is regulated by national legislation, women hold on average 20.3% of the parliament seats. In countries in which such legislation is not in place, women hold only 13% of the seats in parliament.

Source: [www.iadb.org/sds/prolead](http://www.iadb.org/sds/prolead)

ILO Tools and further reading on gender awareness raising:

- Gender Equality and Decent Work: Selected ILO Conventions and Recommendations Promoting Gender Equality. Bureau for Gender Equality and International Labour Standards Department
- Modular Package on Gender, Poverty and Employment: Reader's Kit. Bureau for Gender Equality
- Guidelines on Gender in Employment Policies: Information Resource Book. Employment Policy Department
- Mainstreaming Gender: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected ILO Tools for Mainstreaming Gender in the World of Work. Bureau for Gender Equality

## As employees

An important indicator of a healthy local economy is the availability of decent job opportunities and the presence of qualified persons to avail of them.

**School-to-work transition:** Special attention should be paid to how young women and men can contribute to local economies. The increasing access to secondary and tertiary education, the rapid devaluation of educational credentials, and the ever-growing demand for experienced workers, among others, are making it increasingly hard for young people to find a job that matches their qualifications and expectations. Data show that youth unemployment rates exceeded adult rates in all 125 economies for which data are available, and by at least twice in several countries in Asia and Middle East. Female youth show even higher rates of unemployment than male youth.<sup>8</sup> Specifically targeting employment services to young women and men can be a useful strategy in advancing the provision of employment opportunities for them in the local economy, as research has shown that a young person whose first experience in the labour market is one of long-term unemployment is likely to move between stages of unemployment and low-wage employment throughout the rest of his/her working life.<sup>9</sup>

**Recruitment:** Gender equality is essential to the promotion of decent work. Women tend to face greater constraints in accessing decent jobs due to fewer opportunities for acquiring skills and knowledge. In the recruitment process employers should be encouraged to introduce a preference for women candidates in case of equal qualification and if women are underrepresented among the company's workers.

**Working conditions:** In developing countries a large part of the female labour force is concentrated in low wage, low productivity and low status work, or in part-time work that flouts minimum wage and social security obligations. Discrimination persists in the forms of unequal pay for equal work, dismissal due to pregnancy, lack of maternity benefits, absence of social security and difficulties in returning to work after interruptions devoted to child bearing and raising. Those who are disabled or belong to marginalised groups often face multiple forms of discrimination. Gender equality at the workplace should therefore be fostered strongly. Measures that allow employees to balance work and family life, such as professional care facilities, flexible working hours, possibility of working from home, paternity leave, etc. greatly facilitate the participation of women in the work force. The contribution of employees to the local economy can be enhanced by convincing employers that better working standards are good for business. Together with other factors, good working conditions are crucial to improve labour productivity and for strengthening the innovativeness and competitiveness of local enterprises.

### Box 3. The Vietnam Women's Union

Women entrepreneurs account for 30% of SMEs in Vietnam and about 60% of private household business owners are women. Consequently, one of the important objectives of the Vietnam Women's Union is to assist women in business development. The Vietnamese government issued a decree on credits for the poor in 2002, following which the Vietnam Women's Union cooperated with the Social Policy Bank to facilitate lending for poor women to develop their businesses thus contributing to the elimination of hunger and to poverty reduction. In addition, the Union coordinates with several state-owned commercial banks and international organizations to mobilize more capital for women to develop their businesses; and provide job creation support, technology transfer training, start up and small business development support.

Source: SME Development Plan of the Vietnamese Government 2006 - 2010

ILO Tools and further reading on gender and workplace practices:

- ABC of Women Worker's Rights and Gender Equality. Bureau for Gender Equality
- Gender Equality and Decent Work: Good Practices at the Workplace. Bureau for Gender Equality
- Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management. Bureau for Gender Equality
- Gender Equality: A Guide to Collective Bargaining. Bureau for Gender Equality
- ILO Participatory Gender Audit: A Tool for Organizational Change. Bureau for Gender Equality

### As entrepreneurs or own-account workers

MSMEs lend the necessary dynamism to the local economy, providing jobs as well as goods and services that boost the local economy. It is well known that in most developing countries, MSMEs employ a significant percentage of the labour force, but most of the jobs created are of poor quality, lacking adequate wages, safe working conditions and minimum social security. It must be noted that, in this regard, there are significant differences between the most precarious micro enterprises and the most dynamic and growth-oriented small enterprises.

More and more women find that setting up their own enterprise or working independently from home gives them greater autonomy, makes optimum use of their skills and boosts their confidence and their social status. Women, in particular, are often required to start some kind of business to complement household incomes. It is also common that they start working in their spouses' or parents' business, without a proper contract and with limited control over working time and resources.

However, despite the constraints that women face in gaining control over resources, a significant proportion of women-led enterprises have evolved from production within the household (home workers) and small trading activities for subsistence, towards more competitive enterprises producing goods and services for local, regional, national and international markets. To enable women-led enterprises to expand and diversify their offer of goods and services, women entrepreneurs require strategic support and access not only to finance but also to professional business development services (BDS) appropriate to their needs. Gender-related obstacles at the community and household level, such as unequal division of responsibility for household tasks and for care should also be addressed. Women entrepreneurs' participation in employers' associations and member-based business organizations can give them the necessary support to access BDS, finance opportunities, human resources development and decision-making structures, all of which improve their capacity to become more competitive.



#### Box 4. Promoting youth and women entrepreneurship in Kizil Kia, Kyrgyzstan

The rural town of Kizil Kia, in the Batken province, located in Southern Kyrgyzstan, has been identified as a pilot location for ILO Boosting Youth Employment (BYE) project intervention and the introduction of ILO's LED approach. The aim is to tackle some of the youth employment problems through an integrated approach. One of the stated objectives of the project is to mainstream gender. Under this objective, several actions have been taken at the national level, namely through action planning, capacity building, gender auditing, and a strong promotion of Convention 156 on reconciling work and family. Yet, even though important developments towards achieving gender equality are taking place at the national level, localities and communities have experienced slower progress in this regard.

In rural towns, many young people, their parents and even local authorities still see migration, mainly of men, to the capital and subsequently abroad as a good option for securing work and an income for the family. Therefore, too many families in Kizil Kia are headed by women who are dependent on remittances coming from the capital and abroad. The situation has worsened recently because of the financial crisis, as fewer remittances are received and more young workers return jobless and are unable to find a job in the local labour market, further stressing the situation of vulnerable groups. It is therefore imperative to identify alternatives for economic development within Kizil Kia, making use of local resources, upgrading skills, and strengthening sectors with potential competitive advantages, able to provide decent employment opportunities for young women and men.

Recognizing that a local economic development approach can be a powerful means to promote gender equality, the capacities of local stakeholders –who have set up a Local Advisory Team, gathering public and private sector representatives– have been built through training workshops and technical assistance in terms of strategic planning, gender equality, youth employment and local economic development strategies to strengthen local institutions. Initiatives to promote agriculture have been undertaken, such as the setting up of a school for cherry cultivation where young farmers, especially young women from vulnerable groups, can learn the business. Several training courses on business management have been conducted, allowing young people to improve their skills base before starting a business. These initiatives have contributed to reduce the reliance on jobs provided by nearby factories, often requesting low skilled workers, and offering poor working conditions and low wages. For many women in Kizil Kia, business education has enabled them to venture into starting their own small scale enterprises. This has made it possible for them to have an income of their own and develop as entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship is increasingly accepted as an important means and a valuable strategy to create jobs and provide economic independence for young women and men. Around the world, a growing number of young people are starting up businesses, revitalizing the local economy and providing valuable goods and services to local communities. Young entrepreneurs can be particularly responsive to new opportunities and trends, as well as contribute to market innovation. The support to youth entrepreneurship at the local level emerges as an important strategy to foster economic growth, to improve MSMEs success rates, and to prevent youth-run enterprises from operating in the informal economy. The ILO has considerable experience using radio and other mass media programmes to improve market information and support entrepreneurship.<sup>10</sup> These formats can be used to reach out to young people in a format that is appealing to them and that allows reaching those who live in remote areas.

ILO tools and further reading on enterprise development:

- FAMOS: Service Quality Check for Supporting Female and Male Operated Small Enterprises. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme
- GET Ahead: Gender and Entrepreneurship Together. Training Package and Resource Kit. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme
- Making the Strongest Links: A Practical Guide to Mainstream Gender Analysis in Value Chain Development. Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise Development Unit
- Leasing for Small and Micro Enterprises: A Guide for Designing and Managing Leasing Schemes in Developing Countries. Social Finance Programme
- Financial Education: Trainer's Manual. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme

### **As unpaid producers and service providers**

The contribution to the local economy in the form of unpaid work of both women and men is typically not included in national or local statistics of economic growth. In the case of housekeepers, productive activity takes place within the household and is destined for family consumption and not for the market. In addition, throughout the life cycle, women, normally to a greater extent than men, devote a substantial amount of their time to reproductive tasks (household maintenance, child bearing and rearing, care of the young, the sick and the elderly) and societal roles (education and volunteerism). These tasks are little by little being shared more equitably among women and men, but many societies still consider such activities as women's and girls' obligations.

Working men also need to be granted the necessary flexibility and leave to fully assume their paternal responsibilities. In assessing their contribution to the local economy, this unpaid work, often undertaken in addition to a job, needs to be recognised, made visible and valued, whether it is being undertaken by women or men.

As more and more women join the labour force, paid care services are becoming a fast growing sector, which, in turns, employs a high percentage of women. Competitive pressures however are contributing to generate low pay and poor working conditions, adversely affecting those employed in the sector.

Enterprises working in the social economy –these are, enterprises which have the specific feature of producing goods, services and knowledge while pursuing both economic and social aims and fostering solidarity– can play an important role contributing to the implementation of community objectives, such as social security provision and care services. Strengthening social enterprises and their provision of services to the community can be an important element of local economic development strategies and can contribute to advance gender equality.

ILO tools and further reading on work and family balance, the “care economy” and social enterprises:

- Women, gender and the informal economy: An assessment of ILO research and suggested ways forward. Discussion paper
- Workplace Solutions for Childcare. Conditions of Work Unit
- HIV/AIDS and work: global estimates, impact and response. The ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work
- African Responses to the Crisis through the Social Economy. Working Document for the International Conference on the Social Economy. October 2009

**Table 1. The various roles of women and men in local economic development**

ROLE	GENDER ISSUE	SCOPE FOR ACTION
Citizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice or the capacity to lobby for one's interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization of common interest groups</li> </ul>
Elected Representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity to stand for elections</li> <li>• Ability to negotiate conflicting interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reservation for women</li> <li>• Selection and training of women candidates</li> <li>• Gender awareness for local government representatives</li> </ul>
Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employability</li> <li>• Discrimination in recruitment</li> <li>• Decent work deficits</li> <li>• Work – family balance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing marketable skills for women, youth and vulnerable groups</li> <li>• If equally qualified and underrepresented, preference for women</li> <li>• Improve job quality for all</li> <li>• Care facilities, flexible working hours for men and women</li> </ul>
Entrepreneur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Control over resources</li> <li>• Access to finance and BDS</li> <li>• Time and mobility constraints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value chain analysis</li> <li>• Membership of business associations</li> <li>• Gender awareness for communities</li> <li>• Support programmes for women and youth entrepreneurs</li> </ul>
Unpaid worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing of reproductive tasks</li> <li>• Invisibility of unpaid work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time off for parental responsibilities</li> <li>• Estimates of value</li> </ul>

## 2.4 Representation and voice

Good governance at the local level implies the existence of effective channels of communication for different interest groups to get their needs and priorities addressed by the local government or development authority. A pre-requisite for such representation and voice is organization through which individuals come together to identify common problems and solutions that enable them to formulate demands that their representatives convey to the local authorities. Where gender relations are unequal, additional work to create equal chances for women's and men's participation is essential. Under some circumstances, separate organization of women and men's groups may be appropriate in order to allow free expression and negotiation of priorities within the group. To begin with, these generally concern the practical needs or immediate necessities, such as water, shelter and food. As self-confidence builds up, women's groups tend to focus increasingly on fundamental issues or strategic interests relating to their status

and power to control resources. Thus, women cease to be passive recipients of development programmes and become partners in shaping social relations and the local economy. The basic difference between the earlier 'Women in Development'<sup>11</sup> and the 'Gender and Development'<sup>12</sup> approach is the empowerment of women, poor men and other disadvantaged groups so that they can become partners and decision-makers in the development process.

Decentralisation can create space for democratic participation of women and men through both formal and informal processes. Institutions such as village assemblies and people's committees allow local views and indigenous knowledge to be deliberately sought and integrated into development plans. Participatory development is built on dialogue between representatives of the different interest groups so that the development agenda is set jointly and not imposed by a powerful local elite or from outside. A corollary of such participation is increased transparency and accountability of local governments.

## **2.5 Barriers to participation in local economic development**

Gender inequality gives rise to a number of barriers for women to participate fully in local economic development strategies. These barriers are even more difficult to overcome for those faced with multiple forms of discrimination i.e., when discrimination on grounds of gender is compounded by discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, occupational status, migration status, disability, etc.

Typical barriers to participation are:

- Lack of representation in decision-making structures;
- Fewer opportunities for education resulting in, among others, limited access to information;
- Skills development limited to certain occupations and positions;
- Segregation in occupations that carry low status and undermine self-confidence;
- Poor infrastructure services and the opportunity costs associated with it;
- Multi-tasking that leaves almost no free time or energy for participation in public affairs;
- Restrictions on access to finance due to lack of collateral and record of previous business success, or high interest rates;
- Inadequate or inaccessible business development services;
- Cultural constraints on mobility of women;
- Scarce job opportunities at the local level causing either brain drain, or distress migration and vulnerability to trafficking and forced labour; and
- Irregular migrant status.

These barriers do not exist in isolation. There is often a relationship of cause and effect among them that compounds the difficulty in overcoming them. A gender analysis should be conducted at the early stages of each intervention to identify existing gender roles and the challenges and obstacles to equal participation that they generate for women and men. In response, gender equality issues should be mainstreamed at each phase of the intervention, i.e. interventions should take into account different needs and wants of women and men and should be oriented towards addressing gender inequalities.

## 3 Engendering local economic development strategies

### 3.1 Fundamentals of LED

LED is a locally-owned, participatory development process undertaken within a given territory or local administrative area in partnership with both public and private stakeholders. The LED approach makes use of local resources and competitive advantages to create decent employment and sustainable economic growth.

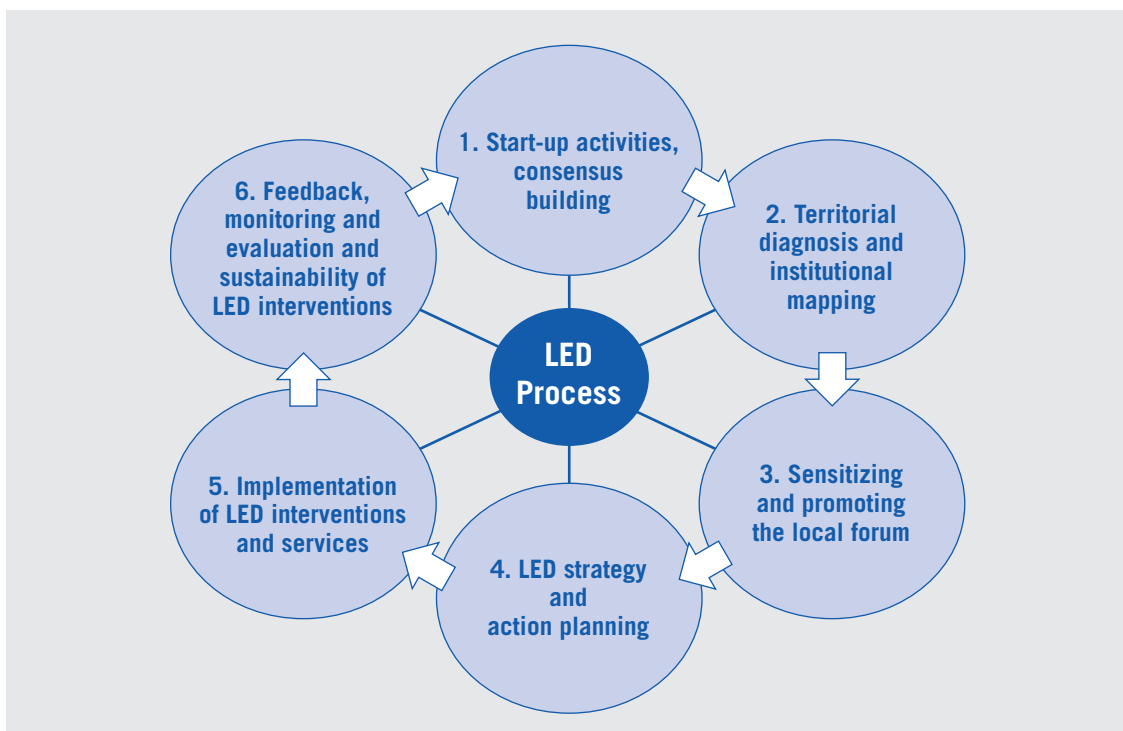
Although primarily an economic strategy, LED simultaneously pursues social goals of poverty reduction and social inclusion. Its design and implementation structures create space for dialogue between different groups within the community and enable them to actively participate in the decision-making process. Target groups at various levels are involved, such as local government authorities, employers' organizations, trade unions, the local business community, and other social partners, such as indigenous peoples' associations, or civil society organizations representing women and youth.

Entry points and the specific balance of fields of interventions included in an LED approach will depend on the specific context and priority needs as identified by the community. However, an LED strategy normally consists of integrated interventions to:

- improve the competitiveness of local firms;
- attract inward investment;
- upgrade employable skills; and
- enhance local infrastructure.

Although flexible and tailor-made in nature, an LED process can be typically divided into the following six phases:

Graph 1. The LED process



The following section presents recommendations and actions tips for mainstreaming gender in each one of these phases.

## **3.2 Gender inclusive participation mechanisms**

### **Start-up activities, consensus building**

From the very start of the LED process, when consensus is being built around an LED strategy and the first activities are being planned, special care must be taken to ensure that women and men are given equal opportunities to be directly involved in the core group of local stakeholders that will lead the LED process, and have opportunities to express their needs and opinions concerning the development of their locality.

#### **Box 5. Who are the stakeholders of an LED strategy?**

The specific local stakeholders that take part in the LED strategy will vary depending on the specific context and objectives to be achieved. Although not exhaustive, the following list provides an example of those stakeholders who are normally involved in an LED strategy:

- the territorial public administrations (municipal and provincial) and their associated combined bodies (community associations, associations of municipalities, etc.);
- the various business sector organizations (employers' associations; trade union organizations; representatives of cooperatives; associations of the self-employed; financial sector associations; territorial employment service managers);
- women's associations and youth associations;
- personnel responsible for international development cooperation programmes with a presence in the territory;
- social and religious organizations, foundations, corporations and other non-profit organizations with social, environmental, cultural or artistic aims;
- research and development centres (R+D) and technical assistance services;
- universities and human resources development organizations;
- the local media.

As women generally face multiple barriers to participation, interviews with the more vocal among them should allow the LED facilitators to identify these barriers and make arrangements to overcome them. These arrangements will include choosing a socially acceptable venue, and convenient time for interviews and group meetings. If necessary, women-only meetings with a female facilitator should be encouraged.

At this early stage, one should use the inputs from the women to map out the relationships of cause and effect between the various barriers identified. Such an analysis will later serve to develop a strategy that tackles the roots of gender inequality.

Initial interviews with more vocal women will also serve to map the social groups in the area so that meetings and focus group discussions are held among homogenous groups of women. After a few such meetings, the leaders among these groups will surface. Each group should prioritize those issues that can realistically be addressed within the LED approach.

Side-by-side with the stakeholders' organization, both men and women should be made aware of women's and youth's potential contribution to the LED process and of the discriminatory attitudes that prevent them from participating and influencing the process. Role-play is an effective means of putting oneself in the place of the other. In addition, in order to build gender awareness of the local authorities, capacity-building workshops held with elected representatives and staff should include gender sensitization as well as enable them to use practical tools of gender analysis and gender budgeting. Representatives of women's groups should be included to convey the concerns and recommendations of their members to the participants of these workshops.

### **Territorial diagnosis and institutional mapping**

When undertaking the assessment of the local economy, the data obtained should be disaggregated by sex in order to identify differences in employment rates, educational attainment, access to resources, etc. If sex-disaggregated data at the local level is not available, interviews with a representative group of women of the community will provide an insight into their social and economic situation.

An assessment of the policy and regulatory framework at the national and local level should be conducted to see whether an enabling environment for gender equality exists. This will be essential so as to ensure that local strategies within the LED process to promote gender equality make use of available support at national level and anticipate gaps in such support.

Studying the impact of previous development efforts on women and men will also provide useful do's and don'ts to be applied in the LED plan.

Incorporating a gender analysis, which is a critical examination of gender roles in social, political and economic issues, into this phase of the LED process is a pre-condition for LED plans to address the needs and aspirations of both men and women. When conducting the territorial assessment with a gender focus, it becomes possible to shed light on gender needs. These needs can be related to satisfying both men's, women's, girls' and boys' basic material needs for day to day survival (such as food, water, clothing and shelter), or they can concern issues like equity, empowerment, and control over resources.

All diagnostic tools developed specifically for the purpose of the territorial assessment must allow sex-disaggregated data to be collected, analysed and communicated to the stakeholder forum that will develop the LED plan. While quantitative indicators can give objective information about the local situation, qualitative indicators enable one to explore the subjective experience of individuals concerning, on the one hand, the opportunities and resources available to them, and on the other, the constraints and vulnerabilities they face in realizing their plans and expectations. Knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative aspects and how they relate to each other allow one to find a better starting point for promoting development from a gender perspective.

Particular attention should be paid to the decent work deficits experienced by women and men, not only in the formal, but also in the informal economy. Are women being confined to low-

paid, part-time work because facilities to balance family responsibilities and work are lacking? Have measures been taken by local enterprises and government departments to prevent, detect and punish sexual harassment in the workplace?

The conditions under which women entrepreneurs operate, the particular constraints they face and the extent to which existing institutions can provide the financial and business development services they require must be assessed. So must the potential market segments in which women have a competitive advantage.

The membership of trade unions and business associations should be examined to see how far women have access to them and the role in policy-making that female members play.

Skills training facilities should also be evaluated for their adaptation to the training and placement needs of women and men – are these facilities perpetuating occupational segregation? How can trainees be encouraged to transcend traditional views of male and female roles in their choice of occupation? What incentives can be offered to employers to recruit qualified candidates from disadvantaged groups including those with disabilities?

### **Checklist**

Relevant questions at this stage are:

Regarding the analysis of gender roles, perspectives and needs:

- In which economic sectors are women and men concentrated?
- What is the percentage of women working in those economy sectors that have more potential for growth?
- Which are the main decent work deficits for women and men?
- What are the practical gender needs of women and men that the LED process must address in order for women and men to be able to participate and benefit equally?
- What are the main gender gaps or inequalities in the territory and how can they be overcome?

Regarding the analysis of access to and control over resources and benefits:

- Is there gender-balance within decision-making bodies?
- Do excluded groups have a voice in them?
- What are the gender gaps or inequalities arising from access to existing resources?
- Who has access to, and control over, the benefits derived from these resources?
- What are the key constraints to women's access to resources and benefits?

The gender analysis should provide the information necessary for developing the most appropriate strategy for narrowing gender gaps and overcoming the consequences of discrimination. It should also facilitate the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men.



## Sensitizing and promoting the local forum

Full local ownership of the LED process can only be guaranteed through wide participation of public and private stakeholders in the local forum and the inclusion of minority or marginalised groups who are most in need of being targeted by development activities. Special care should be taken so as not to reproduce existing inequalities within the forum. This is done by identifying and including excluded groups, and by ensuring that all stakeholders have an equal voice within the forum.

This forum is key to the success of LED as it formulates and implements the local economic development strategy on the basis of local knowledge and exchange of ideas between its members. The particular form the forum adopts will vary depending on the context, the territory's existing institutions, and the degree of formalization of the relations among stakeholders. For example, in post crisis situations or in those localities where institutions are weak or not legitimate in the eyes of the community, the establishment of a Local Economic Development Agency (LEDA) may provide a neutral space where stakeholders can meet. In contrast, in countries with high institutional capacity it might not be wise to form yet another agency but rather a forum, which may take the form of a public-private committee, a territorial council, etc., to orient and build the capacity of existing institutions for implementing local economic development initiatives.

Women's representation in the forum should be as proportionate to the female population of the area as possible, and should include representatives of women's organizations, self-help groups, women's cooperatives, business associations, etc. The local forum should warrant spaces for persons living with HIV/AIDS and for persons with disabilities or who otherwise have special needs.

However, merely having a sufficient number of women present in meetings and workshops is not enough. Their active participation must be encouraged. In order to ensure equal participation, certain gender-specific capacity building measures may be required to promote financial and legal literacy, understand the functions of local government and the budgeting process, and develop leadership, presentation skills and the self-confidence necessary to lobby for the interests of one's group.

This section has dealt with the launching of the LED process in a locality and ways of mainstreaming gender into it. The following section deals with the planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of LED strategies.

### Checklist

Relevant questions at this stage are:

- Are men and women adequately represented in the forum?
- If not, what are the reasons?
- Does the Forum include members from disadvantaged or vulnerable groups?
- Are the venue and the Forum's meeting time appropriate and accessible to all members?
- Is there a group or a person who has more say than the others in decision-making?
- Are the representatives of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups able to speak freely?  
Are their opinions taken into account adequately?

### **3.3 LED strategy and action planning**

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On the basis of the analysis conducted in the initial phases of the LED process, the task of the local forum is now to define realistic development plans for the locality based on local stakeholders' priorities, and define the objectives to be achieved within a specific time-frame, with activities identified for the short, medium and long term. At this stage decisions must be taken about how best to achieve gender equality and overcome the constraints that women and other disadvantaged groups face in the various roles described in Table 1.

When designing each one of the activities that will be undertaken as part of the strategy, it is important to assess whether they are contributing to improve the situation of women in terms of their access to better jobs, to services that support enterprise start up and growth, and decision-making bodies and structures. Each activity needs to have clear performance indicators, which will allow monitoring of results and identification of shortcomings. The activities will be developed by considering the human and financial resources available to achieve these outcomes. In allocating resources, the information obtained through the gender analysis will be used to ensure that the specific and different needs of women and men are addressed in the process of gender budgeting. A pre-requisite of such budgeting is knowledge of the institutions which are responsible for the local budget, the policy context in which it is framed, as well as the processes by which it is established and adopted. A first step in introducing it is a comparative analysis of the impact on women/girls and men/boys of existing budgetary allocations. Based on this analysis, the next step then is to allocate resources to fund interventions that address inequalities between the two.

In most local contexts, the following measures will be required to correct gender imbalances :

- Support entrepreneurship in sectors that have potential for growth with a view to improving competitiveness;
- Adopt policies and build capacity of microfinance institutions and providers of BDS to adapt and respond to the specific needs of women – this may require the establishment of a special agency targeting women needs, where segregation between women and men is high, or an analysis of how existing agencies are responding to women's specific needs, with a view to improving their targeting and services;
- Support better access of disadvantaged women to decision-making bodies and structures through awareness raising campaigns, training and other activities aimed at increasing their representation;
- Promote the employability of women and other disadvantaged groups through skills training and upgrading, raising their awareness of sources of information on job offers, as well as coaching for approaching prospective employers;
- Support the training and recruitment of women and men in a wide diversity of occupations. Special attention must be put on avoiding the perpetuation of gender stereotypes;
- Provide incentives to employers to recruit qualified persons from these groups into a variety of occupations and not only the low-end ones;
- Ensure decent working conditions for them through obligations to use written contracts, register workers with social security agencies, provide adequate leave, child care and family services, guarantee freedom of association and submit to labour inspection;
- Help women retain decent jobs through flexible schedules, tele-working etc. and enable them to reintegrate the labour market after career breaks by providing for refresher courses.

### **Box 6. El Salvador – LEDA in Sonsonate sets up special agency for women’s entrepreneurship**

In El Salvador, 80% of women’s jobs are created in enterprises that are owned by women. To develop and implement a model of development and empowerment of women entrepreneurship, the Local Economic Development Agency of the Department of Sonsonate has promoted a Centre of Entrepreneurial Services for women, which has made it possible for women to have access to technical and financial resources. The provision of business development services focused on women has not only enabled the start-up and expansion of women’ businesses, but has also had a positive impact on their participation in local governance. By accessing services designed for their specific needs and participating in information sessions and training courses that are organized in a space where decision-makers meet regularly, the women have also the opportunity of building their networks, voicing their concerns and improving their representation in decision making structures at the local level.

Source: ILO-LED story by Walter Urbina, August 2007<sup>13</sup>

The following checklist provides an example of the types of questions that the LED promoters can use to assess whether the planned strategies are contributing towards improvements in the economic and social situation of both women and men.

#### **Checklist**

Relevant questions at this stage are:

- Does the LED strategy clearly states gender equality goals, objectives and outcomes?
- Do the planned activities match the gender issues and equality goals identified in the territorial diagnosis?
- Are targets disaggregated by sex when appropriate?
- Do partnerships include organizations/institutions that work on gender equality issues?
- In the long run, will the strategy have a positive or a negative impact on women’s socioeconomic status and empowerment?
- Does the strategy include indicators disaggregated by sex?
- Are the strategy indicators adequate to measure gender equality outcomes?
- Are the budget allocations appropriate for gender promotion?
- Does the strategy build on the initiatives of other organizations in the locality aimed at promoting gender equality?

#### **Implementation of LED interventions and services**

As with the local forum, the representation of women and other disadvantaged groups at all levels of the implementation structure needs to be addressed. Sex balance in implementation structures can be ensured through quotas or separate election of male and female committee members. Special attention should be paid to ensure that disadvantaged women have a chance to participate actively.

### Box 7. Village banking in Lao PDR

The village bank in Ping Neva was set up in 2004 as part of a programme jointly undertaken by the government, an NGO and the ILO to bring financial services to the rural areas. It now has 131 members who regularly deposit their savings (half a dollar a week on average) in the bank. They are used to give out loans to village bank members, mostly for business needs. At the end of the year, a major part of the surplus that has been generated through its loan operations is paid out to members as interest on their savings, some is used to pay the management committee, and the remainder is allocated to the development of the village or for improving welfare.

With a view to ensuring adequate representation of women in the management committee of the bank, separate elections for male and female candidates are held every year. In villages where residents have had little or no exposure to democratic practices and where leadership is usually based on social status, being able to elect and control the work of the management committee provides villagers, both women and men, with the opportunity to participate in and influence the shaping of development outcomes which affect them.

However, despite the ILO's recommendation that the village banks elect at least three women to the five-member management committee, in 2009, only 32% of management committee members were women. In general, awareness on the importance of gender equality is low in the villages, and targeted action, for instance through training, is needed to ensure that village banks contribute to the reduction of inequalities rather than reinforcing them.

To date, 142 village banks have been set up in Lao PDR, either with support of the ILO or following ILO's model. The 142 village banks have a combined membership of 31,926 people and a capital of US\$3.9 million.

Source: ILO-LED Story by Linda Deelen and Eva Majurin, June 2008<sup>14</sup>

The implementation structures set up need to be vested with sufficient formal authority to ensure public acceptance of their decisions. Where local fragmentation is high, it will take longer to build a consensus, but, once achieved, it may last longer.

An LED strategy will necessarily involve the local government as a key partner. The capacity of the relevant departments of local government and public and private institutions involved will need to be built to communicate information as widely as possible on the LED strategy and build rapport with the variety of stakeholders. Special measures may be required to overcome the difficulties in communicating with women – if female literacy levels are low for example, interpersonal and audio-visual means should supplement written communication.

LED strategies may involve a combination of integrated interventions in different areas that reinforce each other. These areas typically are:

**Enterprise development:** Micro and small enterprises are important sources of employment and self-employment for women. Women are increasingly active in small-scale businesses in both formal and informal economies and in developing as well as in developed countries. Women owned and operated enterprises may have different needs for furthering growth than those owned or operated by men. For example, in several countries, women face greater obstacles in the first stage of starting a business, due to limited access to land, financial resources and a low skills base, as well as skills and business ideas that typically lead them to enter overcrowded business sectors.

Supporting women-owned micro enterprises reduces community dependence on a limited number of local employers. In improving the competitiveness of local firms, the LED forum should target economic sectors with long-term potential for growth that offer equal opportunities to women and men. This is especially important in areas where traditional occupations have suffered due to globalisation and consequent competition from cheaper and/or better quality imports.

#### **Box 8. Revitalization of the traditional Handicrafts Sector, Shkodra, Northern Albania**

In this region, women undertake the production of handicrafts in addition to their household duties while men market them alongside other subsistence activities like fishing or agriculture. When analysing this activity from the point of view of competitiveness, the following weaknesses were identified:

(i) insufficient quality and variety of products; (ii) poor equipment available to the micro-enterprises engaged in the production of handicrafts; (iii) bad working conditions of the women involved in the production; and (iv) weak supply-chain management and marketing strategies (e.g. acquisition of raw material, branding). The handicraft operators' limited awareness of these shortcomings was also considered an impediment to the development of competitive products.

The Local Economic Forum identified improvements in the cluster of enterprises producing traditional handicrafts as a priority. 33 women managers of traditional handicrafts workshops in Shkodra and Zogaj were selected for training. They learned how to improve product quality and productivity, to better working conditions of women employees, and to diversify their marketing strategies. In addition, intensive technical training on product development was conducted by business experts over 19 days on objects ranging from textiles and embroidery, to wood and filigree products. It showed participants how to prepare a successful product line, how to infer and exploit market trends, how to best organize the process of production, how to evaluate production through informal feedbacks received during handicraft fairs and how to enhance goods' attractiveness through decorative packaging.

To create synergies among the workshops and to valorise the cultural heritage of Shkodra, each product was re-thought as part of a newly designed collection. This action simultaneously privileged the individual crafters' incentive to cooperate, and strengthened competitiveness on the national and international traditional handicraft market. Contacts were established between foreign markets in Western Europe and the cluster of workshops of Shkodra. They received orders for a collection of textiles and filigree to be sold in Italy and France during the Christmas season in 2007.

Source: Final report of ILO Technical Cooperation Project no. ALB/04/01/AGF

Programmes to support entrepreneurship should include strategies to increase women's access to credit and business development services. However, even when credit is accessible, disadvantaged women often lack the capacity to take risks and the confidence to start an enterprise. Through a dynamic process of assessing their situation needs and opportunities, and building both personal and business assets, women have succeeded in setting up their own businesses. Peer support, mentors, role models and membership of business associations play a major role in helping these women to overcome the psychological barriers to entrepreneurship that they face.

### **Box 9. Deborah, a blind small shop owner in Uganda**

The ILO is actively working in Africa in the promotion and support of enterprises managed by women with disabilities.

A loan of 30,000 Ugandan Shillings (US\$ 18 approximately) from Blind But Able, a local non-governmental organization, helped Deborah start a small shop eight years ago selling crates of soda and beer. With virtually no competition from similar vendors in her home town, she did good business. An ILO-supported business-training course for disabled women gave her the idea of installing a tank on her property and selling the water from it. This together with the income from her shop and the allowance she receives as District Counsellor enables her to earn UGX 800,000 (US\$ 482) a month, enough to support eight people in her family.

Besides running her business, she is a board member of the Uganda National Association for the Blind and helps distribute grants to other entrepreneurs in the central region.

Deborah says, “the business is not bad. It’s been easy for me. That’s why I am still running it. It gives me peace and puts little pressure on me. Also, it allows me to easily do things for myself. I am happy because it is me assisting my family”.

Source: ILO (2008), *Voices of women entrepreneurs in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia*, p. 21

Another crucial aspect of initiatives to promote enterprise development is skills upgrading. A fundamental driver of productivity, skills upgrading is needed to adapt to changing demands for competencies in the labour market, keeping up with technological advances, adapting to changes in consumers tastes and preferences, and anticipating future market innovations.

Opportunities for skills development and upgrading are often scarce in micro and small enterprises and many owners are trapped in a vicious circle of low skills base, limited production and poor returns. Skills development therefore can help entrepreneurs to better manage their businesses, increase productivity and competitiveness and diversify their production. It is especially important for women entrepreneurs, because in several countries women have had fewer opportunities to participate in skills training programmes and therefore need to update and upgrade their skills to be able to compete in overcrowded business sectors.

## Box 10. Gender mainstreaming and social inclusion in Nepal

In response to an overwhelming demand for decent employment opportunities in Nepal, the ILO is assisting its national and local partners in two target districts (Dhanusha and Ramechhap) to implement the Employment Creation and Peace Building through Local Economic Development (EmpLED) project. Gender and social inclusion are issues which the Government has recognised as critical to equitable development of Nepal.

In order to strengthen efforts in gender mainstreaming and social inclusion in the enterprise, infrastructure and skills development initiatives of the project, a strategy was developed to identify entry points for more actions targeting women and vulnerable groups more deliberately. A national consultant was engaged to develop the strategy, which was later presented and validated in a workshop with stakeholders. To date, the project has achieved good results thanks to improved targeting efforts: 34% of the project beneficiaries of the project are women, 42% are indigenous peoples and 10% are Dalits. In regards to skills upgrading training, 37% of the beneficiaries are women, 35% are indigenous peoples and 10% Dalits.

Desired outcomes of LED interventions on gender-sensitive enterprise development initiatives are:<sup>15</sup>

- Improved productivity of women-owned or operated enterprises;
- Greater opportunities for women to venture into high-return business fields;
- Safer workplaces for women workers, where sexual harassment and occupational health and safety problems are addressed;
- Higher self-confidence among women entrepreneurs as they, respectively, become knowledgeable about their options and their rights as workers and entrepreneurs;
- Greater access of women micro entrepreneurs to higher credit levels and technical support, allowing them to move to less crowded business fields.

When focussing on youth entrepreneurship, it is important to bear in mind that among young entrepreneurs, girls and young women require special attention as they face additional problems in regards to the factors listed below, which should be addressed through LED strategies:

- Social and cultural attitudes towards youth entrepreneurship;
- Entrepreneurship education and training;
- Access to finance, start-up financing;
- Administrative and regulatory framework; and
- Business assistance and support.

Promoting and strengthening the foregoing factors will most likely improve the situation of young entrepreneurs, whether their entrepreneurship is survivalist –those who become self-employed in order to have a source of non-wage income– or opportunity-motivated, this is, when entrepreneurship is motivated by the identification of an economic opportunity.

LED strategies could also be a powerful vehicle to strengthen policy coherence at the national and local level. As in other areas of work, LED initiatives addressing youth entrepreneurship work in a parallel manner at the national and local level. At the national level, advice and capacity building is provided to key institutions such as Ministries and training institutions for the design of effective youth employment policies. At the local level, youth entrepreneurship is encouraged by providing business education targeted to young people, working alongside micro

finance institutions for the development of financial products to which young entrepreneurs can access, and business development services, for the provision of business services and monitoring.

**Value chain development:** All the steps and interrelations between input supply and the end product form a value chain. A value chain therefore describes the sequence of inputs required to develop a product (such as land, raw materials, capital, labour, information, etc.), and the value of each. A value chain analysis seeks to identify what value is added where, and how the final market price is distributed through the chain.

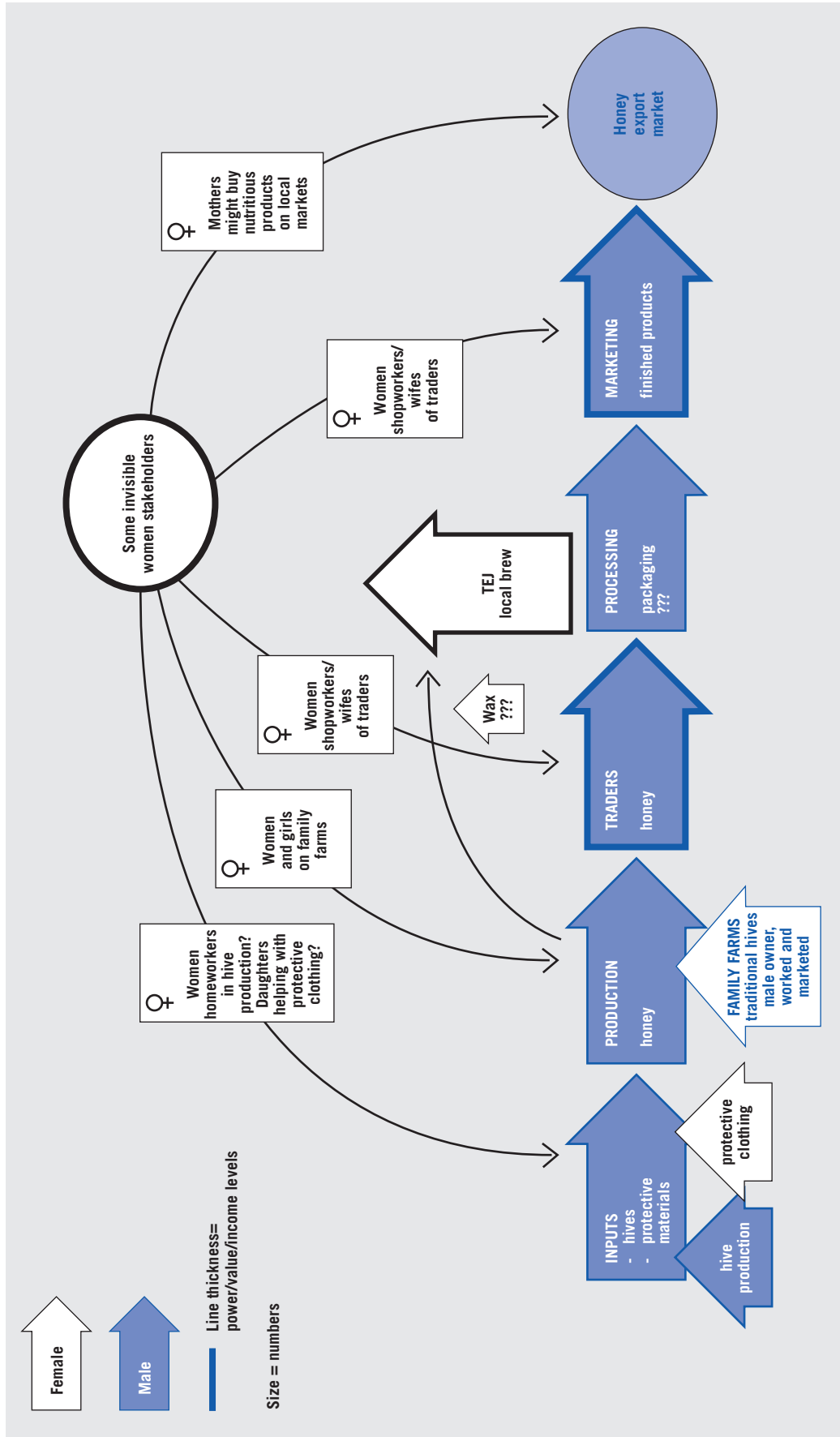
By doing so, the complex array of relationships and linkages in the production process can be understood with a view to identifying entry points to enhance competitiveness, improve working conditions, address imbalances and inequalities in value chain governance and improve the profitability of those in the lower end of the value chain.

Often, women's work in the value chain is invisible or tends to be concentrated in low value-adding activities. A gender sensitive value chain analysis therefore identifies how gender relations impact on different parts of the value chain, such as in which points of the value chain women are concentrated, where working conditions can be improved, and where women need specific training support to improve their business doings.

The graph below illustrates an exercise, as part of a gender-sensitive value chain analysis, aimed at including in the chain all main activities where women are involved, even as "invisible" contributors, and to identify if women are involved in high or low value-adding activities.



Graph 2. Some invisible women stakeholders in a honey value chain in Ethiopia



Source: Making the strongest links: A practical guide to mainstreaming gender analysis in value chain development. ILO. 2009

A value-chain analysis can help understand local and external market access and the demand for products, and can identify the need for support of women entrepreneurs in different links of the chain. It is also important that the resulting conclusions on how to strengthen the value chain avoid situations in which disadvantaged groups (e.g. poor women, girls, disabled women and men, etc) loose out while other (more prominent) parts of the value chain receive upgrading.

**Infrastructure development:** The lack of adequate infrastructure is a core dimension of poverty. Women and girls tend to be most affected by the opportunity costs associated with poor infrastructure that preclude education, access to health services and participation in productive activities.

These considerations should also determine the type of facilities for skills training and upgrading that are developed and the investment of public funds in local infrastructure. As far as possible, employment-intensive infrastructure development should be opted for, so that the goals of reducing unemployment and poverty are simultaneously achieved. Where communities have been entrusted with infrastructure development, the role of women in it has been enhanced through active interventions, and the assets created have proved more appropriate to their needs. These are generally:

- affordable transport and communications;
- secure shelter;
- adequate water supply and sanitation;
- clean, affordable energy;
- professional care facilities for children, elders, sick and handicapped

These improvements also contribute to provide a more adequate economic environment, in which entrepreneurial activity can be better developed.

## Box 11. Gender Analysis Questions on Infrastructure Development Plans

### Gender division of labour and gender needs

- Have the activities of women and men that are related to the proposed infrastructure been identified?
- Have both women's and men's needs been considered?
- How will the planned intervention affect current activities and responsibilities of women and men? For instance, will it affect the time women and men spend on the transport of goods to the market, travel to work, carrying of water, or collection of fuel?
- How will the participation of women and men in infrastructure building affect their other responsibilities?

### Access to and control over resources and benefits

- Will the LED implementation provide opportunities for women to be employed and trained in the construction or operation and maintenance of the infrastructure? Will they be employed in new industries that may be attracted to the area after the completion of the infrastructure project?
- Will women be involved in the users' association? Specifically, will they be involved in the decision making over rules of use and operation and maintenance?
- Will the project adversely affect women's access to information, resources, and markets? If so: Has the project introduced ways of minimizing these effects? Consider the following:
  - Women's marketing of goods and other income-related activities as a result of the location of transport-related infrastructure
  - Resettlement of women and their families as a result of the construction of the infrastructure
  - Contact with other women (as in the case of private water pumps or piped water systems that allow them to save time for completing certain tasks)
- Have the women or concerned NGOs operating in the areas been consulted on the design and location of the infrastructure?

### Constraints

- Is the proposed infrastructure socially or culturally acceptable and accessible to women? Can they use it?
- Does the LED plan include measures to address constraints to equal participation and benefits by women and men?
- Does it offer facilities or services that will support women's participation at different stages of the project, including operation and maintenance of the structure?

Source: NEDA Philippines, GAD Checklists

## Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring of progress indicators is a continuous process that provides the necessary feedback to fine tune the LED process and to reorient the strategy to better achieve the objectives. It considers:

- **Inputs:** the financial and physical resources that are used
- **Outputs:** the goods and services that are generated with the inputs
- **Outcomes:** the local use of and satisfaction with outputs
- **Impact:** the ultimate effect of the LED strategy on economic development, decent work opportunities, social conditions including women and men's time-use, status and role in decision-making

Evaluation on the other hand, is a **periodic assessment**, which looks not only at the performance, efficiency and impact of the LED strategy, but also at its relevance considering changes in the economic and social conditions the locality faces. Periodic assessment therefore provides feedback to the strategy, and tests its relevance in the face of dynamic local conditions. The evaluation can be focused both on the implementation, understood as a process, or on its results.

Regarding gender outcomes, the following checklist provides an example of questions that will allow one to assess to what extent both women and men are being taken into consideration in the LED strategy.

### Checklist

Sample evaluation questions on gender aspects of the LED process:

- Do indicators of progress measure gender differences in outputs and outcomes?
- How do budget allocations impact on the distribution of benefits between women and men?
- What improvements do women report on their living conditions, household relations, and status as a result of the LED process?
- Has the capacity of the implementing agency been increased in regards to the promotion of gender equality?
- Is the monitoring system equipped to collect and record sex-disaggregated data concerning participation, awareness, access to and control over resources?
- Are women and men both partners and beneficiaries of the LED strategy?
- Are women and men being consulted as part of the monitoring and evaluation process?
- Have both had the opportunity to express their opinions on the impact of the project?

Impact assessments, for each of the different interventions that form part of the LED process should pay attention to the impact on gender equality. The impact may be conceptualized as a continuum going from interventions that reinforce inequalities to those that transform unequal gender relations.

**Table 2. Types of gender impact**

<b>GENDER NEGATIVE</b>	<b>GENDER NEUTRAL</b>	<b>GENDER SENSITIVE</b>	<b>GENDER POSITIVE</b>	<b>GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE</b>
Uses gender norms, roles and stereotypes that reinforce gender inequalities	Gender norms, roles and relations are not affected	Addresses gender norms, roles and access to resources in so far as needed to reach project goals	Changing gender norms, roles and access to resources is a key component of project outcomes	Transforms unequal gender relations to promote shared power, control of resources, decision-making, and support for women's empowerment

A crucial aspect of LED strategies is their sustainability. This can be defined as the capacity of stakeholders to attain outcomes and continue the LED process even after the initial LED strategy or project ends. Sustainability is therefore a major parameter of the LED strategy, and actions to secure it should be undertaken from the start. Stakeholders should be aware that decisions taken based on consensus and agreement between local stakeholders are likely to take longer –especially in cases where extra efforts are necessary to ensure women's full participation– but are also likely to last longer.

Spin-off benefits of successful LED interventions can include among others: the investment in education and reduction in child labour due to higher incomes; increased job opportunities leading to lower migration rates and lower vulnerability; increased social protection; more transparency and accountability of local governments due to greater political consciousness of women's and men's organizations, etc.

## 4 Conclusion

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From its inception to the assessment of its impact, the LED process must integrate local goals for gender equality. The initial contacts with the local population, the gathering of data that informs the LED strategy, the structures set up to plan and implement the strategy and the monitoring and evaluation of achievements, all need to promote the participation of women and men and address their specific needs and priorities. Only then can the process be truly participatory and the results sustainable.

This guide has shown why gender mainstreaming is necessary, the potential contribution of women and men to local economic development, the barriers to participation of groups that are discriminated against, and ways in which gender can be mainstreamed in the different phases of the LED process. The annex contains a brief description of a number of tools developed by the ILO that can help reduce gender gaps at the local level.

Practitioners know that transforming gender relations requires persistent and coordinated efforts over a long period of time. The usual technical cooperation project framework may not be sufficient for such deep social change. This requires the long-term commitment of the facilitators and stakeholders of local economic development. Only then can gender equality in women's mobility, literacy, access and control over resources, productivity, access to markets, as well as status and decision-making powers, be realised.

- 1 International Labour Conference, Provisional Record 13, 98th Session, Geneva, 2009. Report of the Committee on Gender Equality.
- 2 More gender-related concepts can be found in: Guidelines for Gender-Sensitive Employment Creation for District Councils, Tanzania. 2008. ILO/UNIFEM. Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/lang--en/docName--WCMS\\_098174/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/lang--en/docName--WCMS_098174/index.htm)
- 3 ILO Policy on Gender Mainstreaming, 1999  
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/gender/newsite2002/about/defin.htm>
- 4 European Commission, Women and Men in Decision-making 2007. Situation and Trends.
- 5 Ayyagari, M. Beck, T. Demircuc-Kunt, A. 2007. Small and Medium Enterprises across the Globe. Small Business Economics 29, 415-434.
- 6 Break Gender Stereotypes, Give Talent a Chance. Toolkit for SME Advisors and Human Resource Management. 2008. European Communities.
- 7 Source: Global Database of Quotas for Women, available at [www.quotaproject.org](http://www.quotaproject.org)
- 8 Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 2007.
- 9 Global Employment Trends for Youth, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2006.
- 10 For more information on ILO enterprise development interventions that utilize mass media see <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/download/wpaper/wp2.pdf>
- 11 Women in Development (WID) is an approach used in planning, implementing and evaluating women- only focused programmes, that does not question the relation of gender inequality and therefore addresses the symptoms rather than the causes.
- 12 The Gender and Development (GAD) approach recognizes that disadvantaged groups are negatively affected by existing social structures. The approach therefore seeks to create equitable and sustainable development with women and men as decision-makers through empowering these groups to ensure that they benefit equally from the development process.
- 13 Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/led>
- 14 Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/led>
- 15 Source: NEDA, Philippines, GAD Checklists, 2007

## Annex:

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**ILO tools that can be used to promote gender equality  
in local economic development strategies**



<b>Title</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>Web address</b>
Building Women's Entrepreneurs' Associations: Capacity Building Guide	ILO. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme	2010	A training tool designed to build the capacity of women entrepreneurs' in running and improving their associations.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/wed">www.ilo.org/wed</a>
Business Group Formation: Empowering Women and Men in developing Communities. Trainer's Manual	ILO. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme	2008	A training tool for trainers to promote group formation as a way to empower women and men in low income communities.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/wed">www.ilo.org/wed</a>
Guidelines on the Formation of Self-help Groups – For families of Working Children	ILO. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme	2006	A guide to educate vulnerable groups: mothers of working children, in financial literacy. The manual emphasizes gender equality & follows a participatory adult-learning approach for learners with limited formal education & training.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/wed">www.ilo.org/wed</a>
Leadership Training Manual for Women Leaders of Cooperatives	ILO. Cooperative Programme	2005	This training manual aims to assist trainers of cooperatives in the Asia-Pacific to raise the awareness of women and men leaders and members of cooperatives on the manifestations of gender bias (against women) in cooperatives, and to build-up the capacity of current and potential women leaders of cooperatives.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/coop">www.ilo.org/coop</a>
Managing Small Business Associations: A Trainer's Manual	ILO. Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise Development Unit	2007	This reader gives guidance on how to build strong and efficient business associations that respond to the needs of both men and women entrepreneurs. It introduces topics that are essential for existing business associations as well as for entrepreneurs that want to start up a new association.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/seed">www.ilo.org/seed</a>
Gender Equality and Decent Work: Selected ILO Conventions and Recommendations Promoting Gender Equality	ILO. Bureau for Gender Equality	2006	This guide provides the texts of some of the key Conventions for promoting gender equality in the world of work and other Conventions with particular implications for gender equality such as those on employment promotion, working conditions, and migrant works.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/gender">www.ilo.org/gender</a>
Modular Package on Gender, Poverty and Employment: Reader's Kit	ILO. Skills and Employability Department	2000	The training package is designed to strengthen constituents' capacity for action regarding gender equality, poverty eradication and employment promotion. The Reader's Kit is intended to be used within a framework of advisory services or for information sessions on the topics of employment, poverty and gender-related activities.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/publns">www.ilo.org/publns</a>

<b>Title</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>Web address</b>
Guidelines on Gender in Employment Policies: Information Resource Book	ILO. Employment Policy Department	2009	This is an instructional material that is aimed at integrating gender concerns in employment policies, covering various policy intervention areas of Global Employment Agenda (GEA). The guidelines include a series of policy briefs on integrating gender concerns into various employment themes.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/employment">www.ilo.org/employment</a>
Mainstreaming Gender: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected ILO Tools for Mainstreaming Gender in the World of Work	ILO. Bureau for Gender Equality	2007	An annotated bibliography of 134 selected ILO tools for gender mainstreaming comprising good practices; guidelines and training material; reports and case studies; discussion and working papers; briefing notes and information sheets; books; and audio-visual material.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/inform">www.ilo.org/inform</a>
Gender Equality and Decent Work: Good Practices at the Workplace	ILO. Bureau for Gender Equality	2005	This book describes good practices of how governments, employers' organizations and trade unions around the world bring gender equality into their institutional structures, policies, programmes and activities.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/gender">www.ilo.org/gender</a>
ABC of women workers' rights and gender equality	ILO. Bureau for Gender Equality	2007 (2 <sup>nd</sup> edition)	This edition incorporates important information relevant to women workers in entries on sexual harassment, women in development, the glass ceiling as well as other major developments for both female and male workers.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/gender">www.ilo.org/gender</a>
Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management	ILO. Bureau for Gender Equality	2004 (Update)	This study reviews the changing position of women in the labour market and in professional and managerial work. It examines the obstacles to women's career development and the action taken to improve their opportunities and promote gender equality.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/inform">www.ilo.org/inform</a>
Gender Equality: A Guide to Collective Bargaining	ILO. Social Dialogue	2002	This guide offers useful information and an excellent starting-point for negotiation, discussion, motivation, awareness raising, training, education, interaction between employers and workers, and creating alliances with other interested agencies/networks.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/publns">www.ilo.org/publns</a>
ILO Participatory Gender Audit: A Tool for Organizational Change	ILO. Bureau for Gender Equality	2008	This brochure gives a brief overview over ILO's past experience with PGA and describes its basic methodology and the audit process.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/gender">www.ilo.org/gender</a>

<b>Title</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>Web address</b>
FAMOS : Service Quality Check for Supporting Female and Male Operated Small Enterprises	ILO. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme	2006	A Guide for business support organizations which provides a gender self-check to identify improvements in an organization's operations with respect to the needs of women entrepreneurs.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/wed">www.ilo.org/wed</a>
Assessing the Enabling Environment for Women in Growth Enterprises	ILO. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme	2007	This tool provides a methodology for country assessments of the environment in which women entrepreneurs operate. It presents a system of rating the enabling environment for women entrepreneurs in core areas, accompanied by recommended actions for each one of them.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/wed">www.ilo.org/wed</a>
Break Gender Stereotypes, Give Talent a Chance. Toolkit for SME Advisors and Human Resource Management	European Communities and ITC-ILO	2008	The Toolkit offers a set of practical business-oriented tools for overcoming gender stereotypes and promoting more efficient and equitable use of human resources in SMEs through a Gender Equality Action Plan.	<a href="http://www.businessand-gender.eu">www.businessand-gender.eu</a>
GET AHEAD for Women in Enterprise Training Package and Resource Kit	ILO. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme	2004 (re-printed in 2008)	Intended for both women entrepreneurs with limited literacy levels as well as for trainers and entrepreneurs' associations, this package contains session plans and exercises for imparting basic business management skills to low-income women. The ten training modules provide substance for a 5-day workshop on Gender and Entrepreneurship.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/wed">www.ilo.org/wed</a>
Local Economic Development in Post-crisis situations: Operational Guide	ILO. In Focus programme on Crisis response and Reconstruction	2004	Explains why local economic development (LED) is particularly effective in post-crisis situations and provides an overview of the LED process. Sets out a practical methodology for implementing activities at the grassroots level, including supporting business, attracting investment, networking and lobbying, environmental assessment and consideration of vulnerable groups.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/led">www.ilo.org/led</a>
Local Economic Development: Sensitization Package	ILO. Local Economic Development Programme	2005	This package aims to establish why Local Economic Development (LED) has become a necessary, viable, and complementary alternative to traditional development strategies in a globalized world. It argues that, in a world increasingly dominated by flows and economic integration, LED provides the adequate framework both to maximize the socio-economic potential of every territory.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/led">www.ilo.org/led</a>

<b>Title</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>Web address</b>
Work improvement in small enterprises (WISE)	ILO. Conditions of Work and Employment Programme	2004	A manual that encourages practical, voluntary action on the part of owners and managers of small enterprises to improve working conditions. It provides check lists that can help managers achieve higher productivity through improvements in the work place. A manual for workers has also been developed. WISE has been successfully applied in over 20 countries.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/travail">www.ilo.org/travail</a>
Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning	ILO. Employment Intensive Investment Programme	2003	Designed for application at local government level, it aims to improve access to essential goods and services in rural areas. Infrastructure includes access to water, fuel, health care and education – domains particularly relevant to rural women. It enables planners to identify priorities in rural infrastructure development.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/eiip">www.ilo.org/eiip</a>
Making the Strongest Links: A Practical Guide to Mainstream Gender Analysis in Value Chain Development	ILO. Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise Development Unit	2007	This Guide provides innovative methods for incorporating gender concerns into the different stages of value chain analysis and strengthening the links essential for gender equality and promoting sustainable pro-poor growth and development strategies.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/seed">www.ilo.org/seed</a>
Leasing for Small and Micro Enterprises: A Guide for Designing and Managing Leasing Schemes in Developing Countries	ILO. Social Finance Programme	2003	Presents an illustration of the pros and cons of leasing to small and micro enterprises, including an overview of the risks for the financial institution.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/employment">www.ilo.org/employment</a>
Financial Education : Trainer's Manual. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme	ILO. Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme	2008	A guide to educate vulnerable groups: mothers of working children, in financial literacy. The manual emphasizes gender equality & follows a participatory adult-learning approach for learners with limited formal education & training.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/wed">www.ilo.org/wed</a>
Women, gender and the informal economy : An assessment of ILO research and suggested ways forward	ILO. Bureau for Gender Equality	2008	This discussion paper provides an overview of ILO research on women, gender and the informal economy which was undertaken during the last two decades. It examines methodological and analytical frameworks used in various studies, identifies research gaps and proposes directions for future work.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/gender">www.ilo.org/gender</a>

Title	Source	Year	Brief description	Web address
Workplace Solutions for Childcare	ILO. Conditions of Work and Employment Programme	2010	Workplace partnerships are effective for working parents considering childcare solutions. The focus of this book is on why workplace partners around the world have become involved in childcare and about the nature of programmes that have been implemented.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/travail">www.ilo.org/travail</a>
HIV/AIDS and work : global estimates, impact and response	ILO. Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work	2004	This paper focuses on HIV/AIDS as a threat to sustainable social and economic development. The loss of life and the debilitating effects of the illness lead to a reduced capacity to sustain production and employment.	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/aids">www.ilo.org/aids</a> <a href="http://www.ilo.org/region/afpro/addisababa">www.ilo.org/region/afpro/addisababa</a>
African Responses to the Crisis through the Social Economy	Working Document for the International Conference on the Social Economy, October 2009	2009	The objectives of this working document are to outline the components of the social economy and to suggest a series of measures pertaining to each pillar of the decent work agenda in response to the global crisis.	

The Bureau for Gender Equality supports the implementation of the ILO's Policy on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming. This entails offering advice to the tripartite constituents and ILO staff on measures to help ensure that policies, legislation, programmes and institutions across the four strategic areas of the ILO mandate are more gender-responsive. Such measures include ratifying and implementing relevant international labour standards, increasing the number of women in decision-making positions, promoting women's entrepreneurship and paying attention to situations where women are particularly vulnerable in the labour market.

The Bureau reports directly to the ILO Director-General and coordinates the ILO global Gender Network. It carries out participatory gender audits (PGAs), technical cooperation projects, knowledge sharing and awareness-raising activities to help strengthen the capacities of constituents, ILO staff and other stakeholders so that they are better equipped to address the gender dimension in their areas of work. The Bureau also participates in the United Nations system-wide gender activities and initiatives, and liaises with civil society groups, academic institutions and a broad range of actors committed to gender equality.



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Through its Local Economic Development Programme the ILO is assisting its constituents in developing and implementing LED strategies in a wide range of economic, social and political settings across the world. This includes countries emerging from crisis, rural and backward areas with child labour, and city slums, as well as growth-oriented clusters where territorial competitiveness is enhanced. Given the growing demand for support to address the local effects of climate change, LED strategies are more and more incorporating the "green jobs" dimension.

Through technical cooperation programmes, we provide policy advice to national governments and at the local level. Our strategies include the use of private sector development approaches and tools such as value chain development, linkages with microfinance institutions, skills development, institutional capacity-building and green jobs.



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