Work and Opportunities for Women

Overview

The Work and Opportunities for Women (WOW) programme is a new flagship programme funded by UK’s Department for International Development (DFID). The objective of WOW is that women have access to improved economic opportunities through business interventions in supply chains and economic development programmes.

The five year programme aims to enhance the economic empowerment of 300,000 women working in global value chains by September 2022. It will achieve this goal by supporting businesses, organisations and programmes that are ready and willing to act on women’s economic empowerment; enabling players across the supply chain ecosystem to drive change; and influencing the UK and global agenda on women’s economic empowerment.

WOW is being delivered by a consortium of global experts at the cutting edge of women’s economic empowerment research, program design, and delivery—including PwC, BSR, CARE International, the University of Manchester, and Social Development Direct.

WOW’s priority sectors are garments, agriculture and personal care. The DFID focus countries that the programme is most likely to work in are those where global companies have supply chains e.g. India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria and Ethiopia.

The programme has 4 outputs:

**Output 1 – Partnerships with business to improve women’s participation in supply chains:**

Businesses improve women’s access to higher-return and higher-productivity jobs and roles in supply chains, with improving working conditions.

WOW’s unique approach—the first of its kind for DFID—will accelerate business action through access to the consortium of experts rather than by providing traditional funding. It will focus on the most entrenched barriers to progress and go beyond simply encouraging women’s participation in global value chains to enabling dignified, equal, and economically empowering work for women.

Initiatives under this output will fall under five categories:

- **Scale** - Existing programmes which have demonstrated proven or promising results can be scaled up such that they reach more women.
- **Replication** - Initiatives which are proven to be successful can be replicated elsewhere to maximise their impact.
- **Innovation** - New interventions can be piloted in a small number of cases.
- **Sustainability** – Interventions that create lasting, systemic change by supporting existing interventions to transform social norms on gender, promote the adoption of new public policies and adapt existing legislation, promote changes in business practice in supply chains.
- **Depth** - Existing programmes can have their scope increased or improved such that they empower women within their supply chains more successfully or in a more sophisticated way.
Output 2 - Partnerships with business to improve data and transparency on women’s work in supply chains: Women’s work in supply chains is made more visible, to improve global knowledge on women’s economic contribution.

The programme will partner with a number of companies in its priority sectors to gain a deeper understanding of the risks and opportunities for women, particularly deeper in the supply chain where women may be less visible, and/or their greatest challenges are unknown. The research will also help us identify other opportunities for partnership that meet WOW’s criteria for further intervention.

Research will be undertaken at three levels: Macro-level (global supply chains); Meso-level (company supply chains); and Micro-level (deep dive country supply chains).

Output 3 - Increased knowledge and support for delivering women’s economic empowerment through economic development programmes: DFID and HMG economic development programmes reach larger numbers of women beneficiaries and improve global knowledge on how to deliver results for women and girls through economic development interventions.

The WOW Helpdesk will provide access to rapid technical assistance and expert analysis for guidance, and know-how to address WEE at different stages of programming through:

- A responsive query and programme support service, drawing on a wider expert pool to respond to queries from DFID advisers across central and country programmes.
- Proactive guidance and support on priority themes for WEE across Economic Development portfolio.
- Regular communications updates drawing together learning from WOW and wider research and evidence on WEE, in the form of evidence digests.

Output 4 - Support to multiple partnerships and initiatives that respond to the recommendations of the UN HLP (UN High Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment) report: Multiple partnerships and initiatives are identified and supported to respond to the seven drivers of change identified in the UN HLP report.

WOW has set up a £1.8m Flexible Fund (FF) which will directly support initiatives and partnerships that sustain the momentum created by the UNHLP to deliver transformative change in women’s economic empowerment. To ensure maximum impact from available resources, the WOW Flexible Fund will support 3-4 initiatives during the 5 years of the programme which have the potential to further the UNHLP agenda through catalytic impact and/or global learning, within this timeframe.

For more information please contact Sarah Pickin at sarah.v.pickin@pwc.com