

WOW Helpdesk Evidence Digest

December 2019

The WOW Helpdesk

The WOW Helpdesk provides rapid, flexible, tailored and specialist analysis, guidance and 'know-how' to support UK government staff in addressing WEE in policy and programming, through:

- An 'on-demand' rapid research and technical assistance service for DFID and other UK government staff;
- Targeted guidance on cutting edge WEE issues and themes; and
- Regular evidence and learning updates drawing on Helpdesk assignments.

You can access selected reports from our queries to date at:

<http://bit.ly/2zM3NKu>

If you are interested in WOW Helpdesk support, please contact:

enquiry@WOWHelpdesk.org.uk

The WOW Helpdesk welcomed Elin Carmichael as the new DFID SRO in September 2019 - congratulations, Elin!

WOW Helpdesk Feedback

Advisers report that the advice they receive from the WOW Helpdesk enhances their confidence in designing, evaluating or scaling up and extending their programmes and rate this advice as 4.5 on a scale of 1-5.



The WOW Helpdesk achieved an A+ score in the DFID Annual Review for year 2018-2019 (September)

A+

New resources on WEE

- Arab Women's Enterprise Fund (2019), DFID/IDB "Working with the Private Sector to Empower Women: What to Measure and How to Build the Business Case for Change." <https://bit.ly/337KDtR>
- BSR (2019) "Making Women Workers Count - A Framework for Conducting Gender Responsive Due Diligence in Supply Chains" <https://bit.ly/2tr4jgi>
- Business Fights Poverty (2019) "How Can Business Tackle Gender Based Violence in the World of Work: A Toolkit for Action." <https://bit.ly/34fcOZi>
- CARE (2019) "Made by Women: Impact Report 2019." <https://bit.ly/35mYtKs>
- CARE Insights Blog (2019) "What's the most effective way to promote change for women working in garment factories?" <https://bit.ly/2qzAj00>
- Equileap (2019) "Gender Equality Global Report & Ranking 2019" <https://bit.ly/2qq3Zxg>
- Equileap (2019) "Special Report: Gender Equality in Kenya: Assessing 60 leading companies on workplace equality." <https://bit.ly/35f043g>
- ODI (2019) "Women in the gig economy: paid work, care and flexibility in Kenya and South Africa." <https://bit.ly/37o01po>
- UN Women (2019) "Ending Violence is Our Business. Workplace Responses for Intimate Partner Violence in Asia and the Pacific." <https://bit.ly/33bfzJM>

Upcoming


BEAM Exchange Webinar 28th January 2020:

"Women in the workplace: how better data can lead to systemic change". <https://bit.ly/2D5qdXY>










Helpdesk Queries & Evidence Highlights

1. Addressing Violence and Harassment




Pervasive violence against women has major economic costs to societies and business. The WOW Helpdesk Query 22 review on violence and harassment, including sexual harassment in garment factories and supply chains, found that:

 All productivity focused interventions need to address the potential impacts on violence and sexual harassment in design. They need to consider risk factors and integrate measures to counter violence and harassment.

Key risk factors

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|---|---|---|
|  Precarious work |  Tight production deadlines that require long hours and overtime |  Limited space for unions to represent workers' needs and issues |
|  Rudimentary human resource systems |  Production targets for supervisors that can encourage abusive behaviour |  Social audits and rights monitoring that don't integrate gender |
|  Lack of internal complaints and grievance mechanisms |  Gender norms that make harassment invisible or accepted |  Absence of effective legislation and enforcement |

The mapping of initiatives highlighted the importance of the following:

-  Training on violence and harassment in factories, tailored to the context
-  Working with the surrounding community
-  Working with anti-harassment committees long-term

Report available on request from [Elin Carmichael](#)

2. Targeted Guidance

The WOW Helpdesk has recently published its first ever [Guidance Note on promoting economic empowerment for women in the informal economy](#). The document aims to provide an analysis of the gender dynamics of informal work, and a set of corresponding recommendations. Here are some key findings:



Informality is here to stay



of people employed are in the informal economy

DFID and HMG can support economic empowerment for women informal workers through:

- Greater research and data on what works;
- Work with governments on laws and social protection;
- Partner with private sector to improve visibility and outcomes through value chains; and
- Support civil society organisation and representation of women.



Entry points include:

-  Digital and mobile technologies
-  Investing in the informal care economy
-  Tackling adverse social norms and violence and harassment
-  Addressing evidence gaps on gender in the informal economy

Read the full Guidance Note here: <https://bit.ly/2RqahrE>

Partnerships with businesses

The WOW team has started working with Marks and Spencer (M&S) in Bangladesh to increase women's access to leadership roles in their Clothing & Home supply chains. They are strengthening HR performance management systems, supporting individual women and changing perceptions of women leaders. They will also be starting work with M&S Food, working with a supplier to tackle barriers for women leaders in the green beans smallholder value chain.

The WOW team is working with another retailer to better understand the unpaid care challenges faced by women workers in the Bangladesh garment industry and how it affects women's role in the workplace. They will develop recommendations for business on how they can help recognise, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work for women.

The WOW Fund

The WOW Fund supports initiatives that drive forward the priorities set out by the [UN High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment](#). In early 2019, the WOW Fund selected **three initiatives** to support, which have now kicked off and are progressing towards delivering impact and contributing to global knowledge across three key areas.

These WOW-funded initiatives are:

- Accelerating national progress toward achieving equality in unpaid care and domestic work and promoting women's economic empowerment. Key area: recognising, reducing and redistributing unpaid care and work. Implemented by [Promundo-US](#), [RWAMREC](#) and [Sonke Gender Justice](#).
- Innovations in informal land tenure awareness, rights and security for the economic empowerment of informal women workers in Delhi and Patna. Key area: enhancing land tenure security. Implemented by [SEWA Bharat](#), [Sitara](#) and [IIHS](#).
- Home-based Workers Organizing for Economic Empowerment - collective organising can lead to improved income, legal status, working conditions and livelihood security. Key area: improving outcomes for women in informal work. Implemented by [WIEGO](#) and [HomeNet South Asia](#).

For more information about the WOW Fund initiatives, visit the [WOW Programme website](#) or contact sarah.v.pickin@pwc.com

Gender and Work in Global Value Chains – DFID Economics Seminar 9 Dec

Prof. Stephanie Barrientos shared early findings from the WOW gender mapping of value chains – a first in terms of the level of data access from the 3 UK companies.



- Companies understanding limited on women workers in their value chains
- Poor systems for collection, storage and reporting of data
- Social auditing is largely ineffective on identifying gender discrimination, but provides a potential source of data and information on women workers
- Issues around data slippage, as only certain data is entered onto audit databases, and often overwritten so cannot be tracked over time
- Companies beginning to promote women's economic empowerment - WOW research enhancing visibility of women workers in company value chains

The research builds on Prof Barrientos book: [Gender and Work in Global Value Chains: Capturing the Gains?](#) Cambridge University Press, 2019

WOW will be publishing a Report over the upcoming months - stay tuned!

Selected WOW Queries July – Nov 2019

Query	Department	Type of support	Theme	Publication
Query 22 Violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, in garment factories and supply chains	DFID Private Development Unit	Evidence review	Violence in the workplace	Available on request
Query 24 Key facts on Women's Economic Empowerment	DFID Private Sector Department CDC Team	Evidence review	Private Sector Investment	Online
Query 25 Tax and WEE presentation	DFID Finance and Tax Team	Evidence review	Tax	Online
Query 27 Incorporating gender equality into the re-design of the Good Governance Fund in Moldova	Good Governance Fund Moldova (DFID/FCO Joint Unit)	Theory of Change Development	Investment, tax, banking, business development	Online
Query 32 Transitions to the Labour Market within Girls Education Challenge	DFID Nepal, Girls Education Challenge Team	Literature review to support programme design	Adolescent girls education and transition to work	Online
Query 34 GESI/WEE Presentation to newly elected Mayors and Governors in Colombia	Prosperity Fund Colombia	Capacity building	Government-level WEE policy and programming	Online