

**GEM-IWG Training Workshop
on
Gender and Macroeconomics**

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***Gender dimensions of the world of
work in a globalized economy***

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Introduction

- To reflect on gender dimensions of the world of work in the context of a globalized economy: to both review the overall progress and propose some measures for future.

Topics of Discussion

- Gender equality and the world of work
- Gender and working poverty
- Economic policies, employment and poverty: Gender dimensions
- ILO's instruments for poverty alleviation and advancing gender equality
- Conclusions

Gender equality and the world of work

- Gender equality at the heart of Decent Work Agenda--- cross cutting priority
- Without gender equality, no Decent Work could be achieved
- ILO's ILS on gender equality: No. 100 – Equal Remuneration, and No. 111 – Discrimination (Employment and Occupation).

Gender equality and the world of work

- **Grounds of discrimination under Convention No. 111 – Discrimination: race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin.**
- **Women can face double/triple discrimination: sex and other grounds.**

Gender equality and the world of work

- **Narrowing gender gaps: women's participation in wage employment has increased over the last 20 years.**
- **But wage gaps persist.**
- **Sex-segregation in labour market also persists.**
- **Women tend to be more under- and unemployed than men. Youth – both sexes are equally affected by higher unemployment rates than adults.**
- **Women are more concentrated in jobs with lower pay, security and prestige.**

Gender equality and the world of work

- Women also grossly under-represented in executive positions.
- While progress made, in many countries, women are less educated than men on average.
- Women also continue to bear more of double burden of productive and reproductive work– main providers of **Care**.

Gender equality and the world of work

- **Women's access to productive assets, resources and services more limited than for men.**
- **Persistent social institution dictating role of women and men at home, in the community and in the world of work.**
- **As a consequence, women are over-represented among the poor.**

Gender and working poverty

- Of 3 billion working population, 609.5 million are in working poverty of living with less than US\$1.25/day.
- 1.3 billion workers are below working poverty line of US\$2/day.
- Poverty has a woman's face: A large majority of the world's poorest are women (an estimated over 60% of the poor).

Gender and working poverty

1. PC

Poverty is multi-dimensional

2. PC + CPR

3. PC + CPR + SPC

4. PC + CPR + SPC + Assets

5. PC + CPR + SPC + Assets + Dignity

6. PC + CPR + SPC + Assets + Dignity + Autonomy

Figure 1: A Pyramid of Poverty Concepts. (Baulch 1996).

Gender and working poverty

- « Freedom » and « Security » could be added from the Decent Work perspective.
- Gender dimensions cut across all these aspects of poverty.
- Less development correlated to more gender inequality.
- Costs of gender inequality in development.

Gender and working poverty

- Most working poor are found in the urban informal and rural economies.
- Much of women's work in agriculture is unpaid.
- Women are a large majority in the informal economy in many countries: invisible, low pay and productivity, outside of protection, etc.

Gender and working poverty

- Much of poor women's work (**both paid and unpaid**) remains unaccounted, they are unorganized, nor represented, nor do they have a voice– **Decent Work deficits**.
- Girls, and young and old women are at higher risk of poverty.

Gender and working poverty

- Impact of recent **increase in crises**, pandemic of HIV/AIDS, environmental catastrophes, reduced social support in transition economies, etc.
- Increased number of women/girls in **vulnerable groups**: migrant workers, domestic workers, those trafficked into the sex sector, etc.

Gender and working poverty

- Addressing gender dimensions in poverty alleviation --- critical.
- Laissez-faire approach to economic growth and employment creation will not automatically translate into poverty reduction of discriminated groups.

Economic policies, employment and poverty: Gender dimensions

- **Promoting employment** – most effective way of reducing income and material poverty, particularly for poor women.
- **“Pro-poor” growth** = high employment content: **Gender dimensions** are crucial.
- Past neoliberal macro-policies implemented in poor developing countries – subject to much criticism.

Economic policies, employment and poverty: Gender dimensions

- Level of export – pro-cyclical impact on women's employment. Policies favouring exports – positive impact on women's employment.
- But trade liberalization in general, involving import substitution – the net engendered impacts could vary, depending on where men/women are.

Economic policies, employment and poverty: Gender dimensions

- Example: employment trends in post MFA period in different countries.
- **Monetary policies:** frequently reducing inflation has a negative impact on employment growth – more negative impact on women's employment.
- **Fiscal policies:** bigger government spending – pro-employment growth.

Economic policies, employment and poverty: Gender dimensions

- Public sector reforms could have **differentiated impacts** on women/men, depending on the share of women in the sector and how the “right sizing” is implemented.
- When men are more substantially affected by retrenchments, the impact on women can be indirect – “added worker” effect.
- Trends of “**informalization** of labour” in many countries – related to persistent poverty in the world (in crises – this has been observed).

ILO's instruments of poverty alleviation: Gender dimensions

- **Integrated approach: Productive employment, social protection, legal and policy reforms, and organization building.**
- **Means of action: Standard setting, technical cooperation, and research.**
- **Decent Work Agenda covers these.**

ILO's instruments of poverty alleviation and advancing gender equality

- **Various types of intervention for poverty reduction:**
 - ◆ Pro-poor and pro-employment macro-policies
 - ◆ Distribution of capital (fiscal policies)
 - ◆ Social transfers and government-funded employment promotion schemes
 - ◆ Enhancing human capital
 - ◆ Promoting employment in rural and informal economies
 - ◆ Increasing labour market access and reducing labour market vulnerability
 - ◆ Organization of the poor

ILO's instruments of poverty alleviation and advancing gender equality

- **ILO's approach to poverty alleviation for women during the last 30 years:**
 - ◆ **Self-help organization + Cooperatives**
 - ◆ **Self-employment (SMES) promotion**
 - ◆ **Micro-credit**
 - ◆ **Wage employment through public works programmes**
 - ◆ **Extension of social protection.**

ILO's instruments of poverty alleviation and advancing gender equality

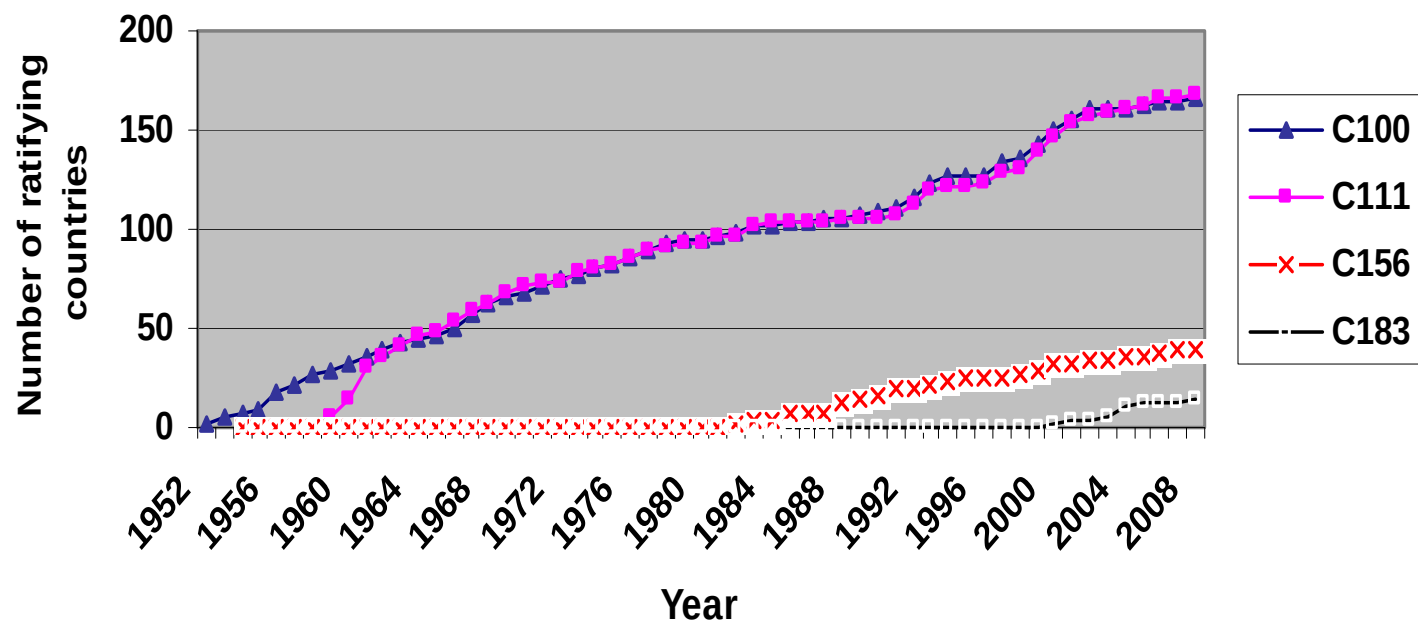
- However, **rights-based approach** was not in the mainstream in poverty alleviation.
- International Programme for **Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)** – more recent development and expansion on rights-based approach.
- **DECLARATION (1998)** – integrate principles of rights in socio-economic development (to set a social floor).

ILO's instruments of poverty alleviation and advancing gender equality

- **International Labour Standards (ILS) with direct relevance to poverty alleviation: Minimum wage, 1970 (no. 131), Rural Workers' Organizations, 1975 (No. 141), and Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, 1989 (no. 169).**
- **Home Work Convention, 1996 (no. 177)**
– specific significance for poor women.

ILO's instruments of poverty alleviation and advancing gender equality

Chart 1: Number of ratification: Key equal rights conventions
1952-2008



ILO's instruments of poverty alleviation and advancing gender equality

National Employment Strategy: Checklist of Key Policy Areas

(Gender and poverty reduction – mainstreamed)

- A. Economic Policies** to influence the demand side (macro, sectoral and migration policies)
- B. Skills and Employability** (TVET policies, technologies, Employment Services+ targeted approach)
- C. Enterprise Development** (Policy environment, targeted SMEs development)

ILO's instruments of poverty alleviation and advancing gender equality

D. Labour Market Institutions and Policies
(Institutions and policies, LM adjustments, Industrial Relations)

E. Governance, Empowerment and Organizational Capital (Representation, voice, freedom of association, and social dialogue).

F. Social Protection (passive and active LM measures).

ILO's instruments of poverty alleviation and advancing gender equality

- **Gender mainstreaming** in Decent Work Agenda: Gender Policy and Action Plan.
- Shift from Women in Development—WID (women specific only) to Gender and Development — GAD (with mainstreaming) approach in the ILO.
- Promotion of gender equality can effectively contribute to poverty eradication, though many challenges remain.

ILO's instruments of poverty alleviation and advancing gender equality

- We need both « targeted approach » and « gender main-streaming » across the board.
- An integrated approach for realizing Decent Work:
 - ◆ National institutions
 - ◆ Macro level policies: LM, economic and social
 - ◆ Programmes and projects

Conclusions

- **Women suffer from more Decent Work deficits and poverty than men.**
- **Addressing gender equality concerns in poverty alleviation is *sin qua non* choice for the ILO (also for other UN and development organizations).**
- **Integrating normative principles (equal rights) in development and poverty alleviation: right thing to do.**

Conclusions

- Need to pay attention to nexus between economic growth, employment trends and poverty reduction, especially **gender dimensions**.
- Important to keep track on “**engendered**” impact of macroeconomic policies on employment and LM.
- **Urgent response/measures** needed in the current economic crisis to help the poor (especially women) in developing countries.

Conclusions

- Gender mainstreaming in the work of the ILO could potentially have a long term positive impact on gender equality and poverty eradication.
- An integrated approach can be tested in the framework of “Operationalizing” **Decent Work** at the national level – through **One UN approach**.

***Thank you for your
attention!!***