Integrating Gender and Structural Reform: Project Update: Structural Reform Measures to Improve Women’s Access to Labor Markets, Finance and Capital

Submitted by: Policy Support Unit, APEC Secretariat

APEC Gender and Structural Reform Workshop: Improving the Environment for Women in the Workplace
Puerto Varas, Chile
25 August 2019
Integrating Gender and Structural Reform:

Project Update: Structural Reform Measures to Improve Women’s Access to Labor Markets, Finance and Capital

Carlos Kuriyama, Senior Analyst
APEC Secretariat, Policy Support Unit

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Background

- This research study is funded by **Japan’s contribution** to support research projects contributing to the **aim of the APEC’s Women and the Economy sub-fund**.

- **Concept note to develop study** selected among those:
  - Not able to get funding from the APEC’s Women and the Economy sub-fund part of the APEC Support Fund (ASF).
  - Related to **policy research and analysis**.

- Project based on **concept note** submitted by New Zealand.

- PSU is managing this project. External consultants from Nathan Associates selected in June 2019 after an open Request for Proposals process.
Objectives

- To identify **structural reform** measures that have improved women’s access to labor markets, finance and capital.

- To provide a significant contribution to a suite of **evidence-based research** on structural reform and women’s economic empowerment that will:
  - help guide APEC’s work on these areas (through EC and PPWE)
  - deepen APEC economies’ understanding on how to use structural reforms to support efforts to advance women’s economic participation and inclusion.

- To support **commitments** by APEC Economic Leaders and Ministers to advance women’s economic empowerment and inclusion.
Approach

- **Literature review** to discuss importance of **structural reforms** in supporting women’s economic participation in labor markets and women’s access to capital and finance.

- Analysis of **main regulatory/policy barriers** affecting women’s participation in labor markets, access to capital and finance.

- Examining the **process on how reforms in these areas are initiated** and how decisions relevant to structural reforms are made.

- Making recommendations on **strengthening institutional frameworks and processes** to support and implement structural reforms.

- **Case studies, evidence-based**, drawing firmly from both the literature review and interviews with officials involved in the structural reform process.
## Outputs and Timelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date of Submission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inception Report</td>
<td>Detailed coverage of the approach, including a preliminary review of the literature, possible policy examples, and a proposed outline of the Final Report</td>
<td>21 June 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Report</td>
<td>Discusses the progress to date, details of the work conducted, highlights of the work with relevant information</td>
<td>26 July 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Final Report</td>
<td>Full report containing the results of investigation covering the scope of the study</td>
<td>28 August 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>Full report after addressing comments from the PSU and APEC member economies</td>
<td>16 September 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Progress to date

- For women’s access to labor markets, information obtained covered these areas:
  - Childcare and eldercare
  - Maternity and parental leave
  - Flexible work arrangements and telecommuting
  - Wage inequality
  - Employment/career discrimination
  - Employment restrictions

- For women’s access to finance and capital, the following topics were covered:
  - Business development support and services
  - Financial inclusion
  - Assessing credit worthiness
  - Equal access to credit and capital

- Cross-cutting factors to enable inclusive policy reforms such as gender-based analysis in the policy process and gender budgeting, collection and use of sex-disaggregated data
Developing case studies

Example: Regulatory Reform for Pay Equity in New Zealand

- 2012-2014: Terranova case
- 2015: Joint Working Group formed
- October 2017: Pay Equity Bill introduced in Parliament
- March 2018: Reconstituted Joint Working Group issues additional recommendations
- May 2019: Education and Workforce Committee issues report and recommend the Bill to be passed

- 2016: Joint Working Group issues recommendations
- November 2017: Pay Equity Bill withdrawn from Parliament
- September 2018: Equal Pay Amendment Bill introduced in Parliament
- 2019-2020: The Bill is expected to progress through Parliament for adoption.
Developing case studies
Example: Regulatory Reform for Pay Equity in New Zealand

Key lessons:

- **Political buy-in**: reform process has spanned two different governments, but both supported the reform process.
- **Stakeholder participation**: from the very beginning, key stakeholders have been involved in meaningful participation and good-faith negotiations to shape the reform.
- **Clear structure**: stakeholders have a clear mandate, reform process have set timelines.
- **Regular reform updates**: transparency with regular updates about the progress of the reform process.
- **Allocation of financial resources**: significant financial resources allocated by government to settle the pay equity claims for care and support workers. Settlement allowed for the parties to the labor market to negotiate the pay equity bill.
- **Access to information**: government is educating employers, employees and the general public about pay equity by making information and resources easily available.
Next Steps

- **Final draft** to be circulated to EC and PPWE in end-August/early-September for comments.

- **Final report** aiming to be presented at PPWE 2 in early-October and EC 1 2020.
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