

# Request for inputs: Report of the Secretary-General on Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027)

## A. Structural Transformation, Productive Employment and Decent Work in the Context of a Changing Global Scenario.

The task of reducing and eventually eradicating poverty around the world continues to remain one of the greatest challenges of our lifetime. National efforts to achieve economic growth can be linked to poverty reduction and gender equality through policies where full employment and decent work for women and men remain the overarching goals of macroeconomic policy, thereby contributing to the realization of SDGs 1, 5 and 8, among others. In this context, UN Women's technical support in **Viet Nam**, led to the revision of the Labor Code to promote women's right to decent work, gradually narrowing the retirement age between men and women; ensuring equal rights to reproductive health, parental leave; eliminating the list of prohibited occupations for female workers; and preventing and addressing sexually harassment in the workplace.

The combined purchasing power of corporations and governments represents trillions of dollars or about 12 percent of GDP<sup>1</sup> that fuel jobs and small businesses. Moreover, procurement is a site of governance because it is heavily regulated at the local, national and international level, including through trade agreements. Women's unequal access to procurement opportunities reflects systemic gender discrimination that prevents women's businesses from growing and creating decent jobs. Shaping procurement policies and practices to orient financial flows in favour of women's enterprise development is a transformative way to address structural inequalities that perpetuate poverty.

Through its flagship programme on stimulating equal opportunities for women entrepreneurs, UN Women addresses gender responsive procurement and supply chains, capacity building, corporate practices and finance, working with governments or the private sector to improve sourcing from women's enterprises of all sizes. In more than 20 countries in 2019, UN Women advocated for gender-responsive procurement, which aims to create a better business ecosystem for women's businesses and businesses that provide decent work for women, including in Brazil, Chile, Egypt, El Salvador, Honduras, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda, Uruguay, Vanuatu and Viet Nam. In **South Africa**, in partnership with Department of Energy, UN Women actively supported the increased participation of women in the renewable energy sector through a private public partnership to provide renewable energy by raising awareness about business

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/how-large-public-procurement> published February 2020

opportunities in the renewable energy sector and establishing a data base of women owned enterprises. In Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan and South Africa, UN Women supported small-scale sub-distributors in rural areas to gain access to income generating opportunities with large multinational corporations. In addition, UN Women worked with those companies to improve their end-to-end supply chain practices. In **Brazil**, a study was carried out to quantify corporate spending on women's businesses.

UN Women also worked with companies to improve decent working conditions internally and within supply chains by promoting the **Women's Empowerment Principles**, which have nearly 3,000 CEO signatories across the globe. As part of this work, UN Women advocates for both voluntary policies and regulations for companies to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community, including through public reporting.

## **B. Expanding Social Protection Systems to Underpin Inclusive Poverty-Reducing Development.**

Social protection programmes across the globe have played an important role in lifting women out of poverty or preventing them from falling into poverty. This has mainly happened through the provision of social safety nets, universal health care, and non-contributory pension schemes. UN Women's support to Member States in the area of social protection has focused on capacity development and integrated policy and technical support. In the **Dominican Republic**, UN Women, in partnership with ILO and UNDP, provided integrated policy advisory services to the Government to promote the inclusion of a human rights and gender equality perspective in the national social protection system, as prescribed by the minimum guarantees identified in ILO recommendation No. 202. **UN Women's East and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) in Kenya** undertook a comprehensive gender-responsive mapping of existing social protection systems in the region, to guide policy makers in expanding access to social protection for women in informal employment, including in agriculture, domestic work and informal cross-border trade.

## **C. Human Capability Development: Addressing the Non-Income Forms of Poverty**

## **D. The Future of Food and Sustainable Agriculture.**

Women farmers, especially those in rural areas, are increasingly engaged in sustainable agriculture, **practicing agroecological and climate-resilient agricultural methods for**

**food security and nutrition.** Through a flagship programme on climate-resilient agriculture, UN Women ensures that it can deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those on ending poverty (SDG1), ending hunger (SDG2), achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment (SDG5) and combating climate change and environmental degradation (SDG13). This includes facilitating reform of statutory and customary laws, policies and practices to address gender specific barriers, already underway in several African countries, including Burundi, Cameroun, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The climate-resilient agriculture programme is working to strengthen the capacity of agricultural extension workers and ensure climate information services are accessible, timely and user-friendly for women farmers. To enhance access to finance for the improvement of the uptake of climate-smart technologies, the programme aims to influence change of the mindset of lenders by engendering lending practices of public and private financial institutions, including through directed lending, direct lending, and credit enhancement mechanisms. As it is critical that women farmers form cooperatives and have their capacities strengthened to meaningfully participate in green value chains, the programme facilitates livelihoods from climate-resilient agriculture engagement.

Furthermore, in collaboration with FAO, IFAD and WFP, UN Women is implementing the “**Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women**” joint programme in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda.<sup>2</sup> The programme engages approximately **49,000 rural women directly and 315,000 household members indirectly**<sup>3</sup> to improve food security and nutrition through the promotion of agroecological practices, expanding income-generating opportunities in sustainable agriculture and facilitating women’s income security, strengthening rural women’s leadership and participation in producer organizations and in local political institutions, and collaborating with policy makers to advance an enabling policy environment for gender-responsive rural development. With support from the Governments of Sweden and Norway, the joint programme demonstrates how UN collaboration at country and global levels can accelerate progress on SDG achievement, with a specific focus on the synergies between SDGs 2 and 5 in rural locations. In 2019, the programme contributed to a **103 per cent** average increase in agricultural production in its target areas; raised over **USD 1.8 million** from sale of agricultural produce; ensured that **81 per cent of supported producer organizations** were women-led or had women in key leadership positions; organized over **16,000 women in saving groups**; and enhanced skills on gender mainstreaming, gender-responsive budgeting and women’s rights of at least **2,000 government officials** at all levels. In Guatemala, Ethiopia and Nepal, the programme supported government in the development and implementation of **gender policies** in the agricultural sector.

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/RWF00>

<sup>3</sup> <http://mptf.undp.org/document/download/18719>

**E. Structural Reducing Inequalities.**

**F. Addressing Climate Change and the Intensification of Natural Hazards**

**G. Fighting Poverty in Fragile and Humanitarian Contexts**