

Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy

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Introduction:

The report 'Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy,' by UN Women, explores global women's economic rights amidst challenges like economic inequality, demographic shifts, and conflict. This strategy adopts a transformative agenda, prioritizing a human rights-based and gender-responsive approach to tackle systemic inequalities and empower women worldwide. Highlighting women's pivotal role in sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda, it aims to amplify UN Women's impact, influence global discourse, and foster multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable change and enhanced economic well-being for women and girls globally, driving towards inclusive prosperity.

FIGURE 2:
Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy



Key Findings:

- 1) Women's Economic Empowerment:** Women's economic empowerment involves addressing structural barriers, discriminatory laws, and social norms to promote gender equality and the full participation of women in the economy. This strategy aims to ensure income security, decent work, economic power, and autonomy for women, aligning with UN Women's Strategic Plan 2022–2025.
- 2) Trends in women's economic empowerment:** Women's economic participation and contributions play a vital role in sustainable development, directly and indirectly contributing to economic growth and development. Enhancing women's workforce participation not only boosts production and income but also fosters savings and tax contributions at the household, community, and national levels. While there has been significant progress in expanding women's access to education and greater control over their fertility, the global gender gap in labour force participation persists at around 30%, with men's participation at around 80% and women's at 50%. This highlights the ongoing challenge of achieving gender parity in the workforce, emphasizing the need to focus on increasing women's labour force participation with a specific emphasis on securing decent jobs that ensure women's economic power and dignity.
- 3) Challenges in Achieving Economic Empowerment for Women:** Challenges include women working in low-skilled, informal, and precarious jobs with limited advancement

opportunities, higher risks of gender-based violence, and unequal access to social protection. These challenges hinder women's economic empowerment and limit their ability to thrive in the workforce.

- 4) **Factors Impacting Women's Economic Empowerment:** Legal frameworks, policies, programs, and services that respond to gender inequalities are crucial for enabling rather than constraining women's economic empowerment. This includes ensuring equal rights, access to resources, and addressing gender-based violence to strengthen women's economic and social rights.
- 5) **Care Deficits and Gender Inequalities in Social Protection:** Addressing care deficits and gender disparities in social protection is essential for advancing women's economic empowerment. Enhancing access to social protection and recognizing the value of unpaid care work are critical steps in promoting women's economic autonomy and well-being.
- 6) **Role of Technology in Women's Economic Empowerment:** Access to digital tools, skills, and platforms is crucial for women's participation in job opportunities and entrepreneurship. Collaborative efforts in areas like digital finance and e-commerce are essential to bridge the digital gender gap and empower women economically.

Policy recommendation –

- **Enhancing Legal and Regulatory Frameworks:** Implementing policies, programs, and services that recognize and respond to gender inequalities. This includes ensuring that these factors enable rather than constrain women's economic empowerment by addressing discriminatory laws, regulations, and practices.
- **Cross-Cutting Approach:** Adopting a transformative approach that transcends siloed, single-issue work to address multiple factors enabling or constraining women's economic empowerment. This involves recognizing and addressing linkages between different spheres or 'issue areas' such as access to decent work, macroeconomic policies, and control over economic resources.
- **Addressing Care Deficits:** Recognizing and addressing the growing challenges of care deficits across different world regions. Efforts are needed to reorganize care, recognize unpaid care work, and ensure that paid care is better remunerated and seen as a public good worthy of investment. Gender-responsive care policies should tackle in-country inequalities and inform national development and migration policies.
- **Promoting Gender-Responsive Social Protection:** Increasing coverage of gender-responsive social assistance and social insurance to address gender inequalities in access to social protection. Targeting sectors such as agriculture, where the majority of women work, and addressing discrimination in policies and practices to expand coverage and increase women's access to comprehensive social protection.
- **Collaborative Partnerships and Engagements:** Engaging in strategic partnerships with private sector organizations, philanthropic foundations, and diverse stakeholders to accelerate progress on women's economic empowerment. These partnerships aim to mainstream gender equality norms and policies, provide technical assistance, and promote women's access to decent work, markets, and livelihoods.

Conclusion

The report emphasizes the urgent need for immediate action to address critical gaps hindering women's economic empowerment globally. It highlights the imperative of improving access to decent work, making macroeconomic policies gender-responsive, and tackling the unequal burden of unpaid care work. By prioritizing these areas, stakeholders can work towards creating a more equitable economic landscape where women have equal opportunities to thrive and contribute to sustainable development.

Read More: <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/un-women-womens-economic-empowerment-strategy-en.pdf>

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