Women's Economic Empowerment Working Group Annual Meeting

October 21, 2019 | Co-facilitators: Lis Meyers and Julia Hakspiel

Attendees (89)

Meeting Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Who are WEE?
3. Priority Topics for 2019
4. Accomplishments
5. Tools Tutorial Session with Caroline Rubin
6. Robin Runge-Key Speaker: Sexual Harassment in Organizations
7. Voting for 2020 Topics

Notes

1. Introduction
   a. 50/50 split of previous attendees to WEE and new individuals
   b. Most people are focused on gender in their everyday work
   c. Went over the agenda and how to download the conference app
2. Who are WEE?
   a. Around since 2014.
   b. Goals: Connect, Thrive, and Share
   c. Over 1600 working group members and new individuals can sign up online
   d. There was a technical advisory committee introduced in 2019, people coming from Nathan, MarketShare, Women for Women, Oxfam, CARE, USAID, MEDA
3. Priority topics for 2019:
   a. Gender smart investing
   b. Women's agency
   c. Technology / STEAM
   d. Addressing unintended consequences
   e. Sexual Harassment and Violence
   f. Zombie Statistics
4. Accomplishments:
   a. Webinars on catalyzing impacts through gender smart investing. Blockchain 101 – what is it and how can it empower women? Blockchain webinar was one of the most attended for SEEP for the year

b. Twitter chat on innovation and technology for International Women's Day. 400 posts, 65 users.
c. Women Deliver on shifting social norms for women's economic empowerment. Showcased work from members like CARE, IPSOS, etc. Very practical and focused on different case studies from all over the world.
d. Partnered with CWEEE for a workshop on WEE metrics. CWEEE is very advocacy focused in DC.
e. Quarterly calls and newsletters to stay informed about the year ahead. Calls are very open, and they really want to get feedback so that it is responsive to the members.
f. All resources are available online and can be accessed
g. AWEF Learning Series: 2 year learning systems, bringing in other practitioners to share their learning. There were 4 webinars that were given

5. Tools Tutorial Session with
   a. Caroline Ruben for the tools tutorial session so people will break up into small groups with a facilitator sharing a tool with the group. People choose 2 tools, there are 7 total, and rotate between the 2. The tools are:
      i. Transforming masculinities
      ii. Do no harm framework
      iii. Ultra-poor graduation handbook
      iv. Household decision making module
      v. Women's economic empowerment – transforming systems through development practice book
      vi. Working with the private sector to empower women – what to measure and how to build the business case for change
      vii. Women's empowerment and savings groups – monitoring and results measurement toolkit
   b. **Group one: Women's empowerment and savings groups – monitoring and results measurement toolkit**
      i. Toolkit can be accessed through mango tree
      ii. Partnership through SEEP and FSDA, coming from the need to measure impact of savings groups. Needed evidence of impact and how that works across different interventions
      iii. Challenges: measurement of empowerment and understanding the different products
      iv. There are 7 domains of women's empowerment that they wanted to measure so the evaluations could be comparable.
      v. There were several workshops to figure out what practitioners found most challenging. Design of projects was difficult and knowing what to measure was a difficulty.
      vi. Three intervention areas that were most common:

1. Looking at savings groups only
2. Savings groups with other economic development interventions
3. Savings groups with a gender integrated approach

 vii. Made a matrix of interventions and outcomes. Positive change and better system measurement when you have dedicated women's intervention for savings groups.

 viii. Need to figure out how to use all the data collected and understand how it can inform programming.

 ix. Set up a new framework to measure women's empowerment, using both qualitative and quantitative means. Looked at J-PAL's toolkit for women's empowerment

  i. Questions:

   a. Could programs be tailored to adolescent girls as well as adult women? A: Specialist should be brought in to understand the factors affecting adolescent girl development and empowerment. Some things could be adapted for sure.

   b. Are these mainly Africa programs? A: mainly sub-Saharan Africa case studies – Tanzania and Ethiopia, also because FSDA was the partner

   c. How many women did you reach? A: We were only evaluating across many contexts through 10 – 15 years that had a robust framework, so this effort was based on learning outcomes based on evaluations that already existed

 x. Is this useful in your organizations?

 xi. Ending violence against women organization – only a small component on economic empowerment currently part of their work, and they want to expand but this is resource intensive, it takes a lot of trust and you need to build a relationship with the women you are working with and focus on what exactly is measurable.

 xii. We need to focus on social elements of empowerment. They need to have freedoms to expand their business or be mobile or to be seen as a breadwinner.

 xiii. Good to provide feedback about the empowerment measurements back to the women because that helps to reinforce the empowerment and make women see progress.

c. Group Two: Transforming Masculinities – Claire Hancock (Tearfund)

 i. Original tool development to understand underlying causes of violence against women

 ii. Principles of all major faiths that challenge GBV

 iii. 84% of global population is associated with a major religion so they are tapping into a language that these populations are using and understand

 iv. Faith can also reinforce male dominance and subjugation of women

v. Faith leaders need to model change and lecture on gender equality in the communities

vi. Train gender champions (males and females) who run 6-week sessions to learn about gender equality and tools to promote dialogue with text used from the Bible and Quran.

vii. They have expanded to a 10-week session – women and men separate for the first half, but then they come together for the second half. Each session is 2 hours long, and they have homework on reflecting on the sessions and how it applies to their lives

viii. Participants are not paid for their participation, communication, or time.

ix. Worked in DRC with DFID and they have seen decrease in GBV and increase in awareness of violent behaviors.

x. Faith leaders have been very effective in role modeling behavior change

xi. Central African Republic is the country that they're currently working in with DFID. They are also trying to make sure that they do no harm

xii. Women are self-reporting many positive indicators (not having to hide money from husband, husband taking on more child rearing responsibilities, etc.)

xiii. Integrating family planning and female genital mutilation discussions into the work and social cohesion and peace-building, using the same model as faith-based leaders.

xiv. Mainly working with Christian and Muslim contexts.

xv. Also developing a non-religious version where religious language is not impactful or does not resonate with populations. The tool is downloadable from Tearfund's website

i. **Questions:**

ii. Is there any pushback in any of these communities? A: Not so much, but we need to contextualize

iii. Incorporating LGBTQ issues? A: not yet because of the legality in some countries and some of the language used in religious text, but this is something that may be included in future

iv. Evidence? Looking at reduction in violence or other metrics? A: There are 2 RCTs that are starting on family planning and GBV

v. Cultural understanding of gender roles is rooted more deeply than faith…how is this overcome? A: need to link to the cultural team and use some faith-based language. Where culture trumps faith, then we need a new approach

vi. How are the men receiving these shifts in attitudes? A: they link the program into the livelihood development program – men are changing their behavior

vii. Limited behavior change evidence, but lots of anecdotal evidence. There is a gap in the research market. It needs to be highly contextualized.

d. Three questions to answer:

       i. Name, role, what you do?

       ii. What is your biggest accomplishment in your work?

       iii. What do you do when you're not working?

6. Robin Runge – key speaker: sexual harassment in organizations

    a. Her organization works with a lot of unions, in many countries. Vast majority of workers (not in US) are in unions.

    b. Works with low wage working women to address sexual harassment in the workplace

    c. Split the room in half, focusing on two different questions

    d. In the age of "Me too" no one can deny anymore that we have an epidemic. What we have been doing doesn't work and totally "sucks." It emboldens perpetrators.

    e. 2 questions: What is sexual harassment at work? What causes sexual harassment at work?

    f. What causes sexual harassment at work?

       i. Power – imbalance or way to exert power

       ii. Lack of accountability

       iii. Culture – socialized a certain way (machismo)

       iv. Organizational culture

       v. Ways people are socialized

       vi. Lack of respect

       vii. Situational / population vulnerability

       viii. Cognitive dissonance / blinders of recognizing it in yourself

       ix. Lack of understanding on what it is

       x. Looking for desired outcome, like belittling, controlling, etc.

       xi. Ignorance that a compliment is hurtful or harassing

       xii. Entitlement

       xiii. Stigma / lack of reporting due to lack of structure to report and concerns for retribution / retaliation

       xiv. Maybe generational differences between women that they can't decide on what sexual harassment is

       xv. Typical behavior of self-blaming

    g. What is sexual harassment?

       i. Unwanted behavior where you are treated differently

       ii. Physical, verbal, threats are all types

       iii. Sexual harassment vs. discrimination

       iv. Impunity and lack of action

       v. Bullying and hostility

       vi. Discrimination in terms of salary gaps that are part of power inequalities

       vii. Invasion of personal space

       viii. Anything that sexualized you – how you are discussed, what you wear, your appearance, also gender identity

    ix. Continuum of micro to macro aggressions and inappropriate behavior

    x. Placing someone in discomfort in order to put them in their place based on vulnerabilities of their gender

  h. Measurements of success are difficult because it's usually based on reductions in sexual harassment being reported, but this is not reflective of what's going on behind the scenes

  i. Victims usually don't want the perpetrator to be fired – they want the situation to be rectified.

  j. Sexual harassment is rarely ever considered a crime and not prosecuted in that way. Even if someone is arrested, it tends not to help the victim because another individual is hired who may do the same behavior

  k. A lot of secrecy around what happens to the perpetrator (forced arbitration, non-disclosure payouts, etc.) which helps to perpetuate the behavior.

  l. We need to create a shared understanding of the definition of sexual harassment. It doesn't mean that organizations all need the same definition, but the definition needs to be clear. This creates a code of conduct and builds power within the workforce

7. Voting for 2020 Topics

  a. Which topics would people like to see continued for WEE in 2020? Priority ranking for next year. Voting on topics for further discussion and ways that people can connect in 2020