

Promoting Women's Employment for Africa's Green Transformation (WE4D)

Context

Sub-Saharan Africa's young population, the growing availability of labour and integration into global value chains offer much potential and present a great opportunity for sustainable economic development in Africa. However, there is widespread unemployment and underemployment and often a lack of qualified workers and (supplier-) companies. Women are particularly affected by this, as they usually do not have the same opportunities as men in terms of access to education or equivalent employment situations. Men tend to have higher incomes and more job security, and female business leaders have less access to resources, assets, and networks.

At the same time, women have an economic potential that economies cannot ignore. For example, women contribute to a modern, diverse and resilient corporate culture that helps companies achieve greater economic success. The economic empowerment of women is therefore a prerequisite for sustainable, social and equitable development.

A new multi-donor initiative seeks to address these socio-economic challenges and opportunities, while also supporting the international efforts towards a green transformation, one characterised by transition to environmentally friendly sustainable practices in all sectors of the economy. **The Employment Promotion for Women for the Green Transformation in Africa – WE4D Programme aims to improve women's employment opportunities, especially in green sectors and in companies and value chains that are driving the green transformation on the African continent.**

The WE4D Programme (2023-2027) builds on the successful approach and guiding principles of the Employment and Skills for Development in Africa – E4D Programme (2015-2023), which supported more than 81,471 people in eight sub-Saharan countries to secure sustainable employment, including 39% women, 44% youth and 18% green jobs. **WE4D** is co-funded by the European Union through the Team Europe Initiatives TEI IYBA SEED (Investing in Young Businesses in Africa – Supporting Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development), TEI IYBA WE4A (Investing in Young Businesses in Africa – Women Entrepre-

Programme	Employment promotion for women for the green transformation in Africa (WE4D)
Objective	Improve women's employment opportunities, especially in green sectors and in companies and value chains that are driving the green transformation on the African continent.
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ); Co-funded by the European Union through regional and bilateral Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs), Norway and Ikea Foundation.
Countries	Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda
Lead agency	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Duration	01.01.2023 – 31.12.2027

neurship for Africa), TEI OP-VET (Opportunity-driven Skills and VET in Africa), and TEI 'Skills for Employment in Mozambique'. Additionally, Norway and Ikea Foundation are co-funders of the programme.

WE4D is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is responsible for project implementation.

Approach

The WE4D Programme implements demand-oriented public-private cooperation projects with the aim of achieving quantitative employment effects and qualitative results in sectors that offer the greatest possible employment opportunities for women and that are actively shaping the green transition of the economy. This includes sectors such as agriculture/agro-processing, blue economy/aquaculture, renewable energies, circular economy/waste management and ecotourism, as well as traditional sectors with high potential to shape the greening of the economy like transport, logistics and construction. Each WE4D intervention is based on partnerships with local or










international companies, and involves collaborations with other stakeholders, such as government agencies, non-governmental organisations, vocational schools, labour unions, and business associations.

WE4D follows the German Development Cooperation's integrated approach for employment promotion. On one hand, the programme designs and implements development interventions to increase demand for labour; on the other hand, WE4D contributes to an increase of the supply of qualified workers and to match labour supply and demand, through training courses on technical skills, workplace health, safety and environment standards, and life skills. To successfully match labour supply and demand, WE4D is linking jobseekers with employers, creating high quality internship opportunities, organising networking opportunities, and building the capacities of local vocational training institutions to provide employment services. The programme also focuses on the regional scaling of these approaches.

Key activities include:

-  **Developing gender-sensitive and green curricula** for selected occupations and integrating these curricula in local educational institutions
-  **Increasing women's economic opportunities and decision-making power** through skills trainings on new curricula and employment opportunities
-  **Establishing entrepreneurship support mechanisms** for companies managed by women to increase competitiveness
-  Establishing partnerships with lead companies to **improve gender-responsive and green business models** in selected value chains
-  **Strengthening social norms** around women as entrepreneurs through **awareness-raising**

One of WE4D's main interventions is the regional TEI IYBA WE4A. It focuses on increasing the number of African women entrepreneurs who have enhanced business capacities, have access to formal financial services, and can take advantage of market opportunities. Beneficiaries in this intervention are businesses managed and owned or co-owned

by African women entrepreneurs, and the goal is to support them towards integration into local, regional, and international value chains.

Another major intervention of WE4D is the regional TEI OP-VET. It intends to complement Vocational Education and Training (VET) programmes financed by the European Commission or Member States at country level by helping these to orient towards concrete employment opportunities created by investments, value chain developments, and other market dynamics in partner countries under the Global Gateway. It thus seeks to support a paradigm shift where the VET offer is reverse engineered from concrete job opportunities.

Impact

The WE4D Programme contributes to **improving employment outcomes for women and to supporting a green transformation in 9 sub-Saharan economies**. By closing existing gender gaps in the labour markets, especially in terms of quality of jobs, the programme will ignite structural changes, as women who become successful professionals and entrepreneurs serve as role models in their societies and encourage other women and girls to pursue their choice of career.

The following outcomes are expected by December 2027 as a result of programme activities:

- 18,000 people, including 70% women and 40% youth, gain sustainable employment in companies that are driving the green transformation
- 70,000 persons, including 70% women and 40% youth, benefit from 10% income increase or improved working conditions
- 11,000 people, including 70% women and 40% youth, have successfully completed a vocational training measure
- 8,000 start-ups and MSME with improved businesses capacities, especially women-led companies and supporting a green transformation
- 85 companies and organisations implement gender-responsive approaches to employment promotion for women

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